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COUNTRY LIFE

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COUNTRY LIFE & COUNTRY PURSUITS

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THE PATRIOT'S CONSOLATION.

AT a time when the minds of men are stirred by emotion more than they have ever been before, there is no need to apologise for following a grave thought to its conclusions as long as the result is to console and sustain. It is not a new thought, but was enunciated originally by one of the wisest of the Greeks, and is quoted in "The War Speeches of William Pitt," of which a review appears in another part of to-day's paper. The suggestion is that a fitting epitaph for the great unselfish statesman would be "The whole earth is the sepulchre of famous men, and their story is not graven only on stone over their native earth, but lives on far away, without visible symbol, woven into the stuff of other men's lives." Such words might have been said of others than those who have made themselves famous. Every noble and kindly lad who has left his peaceful occupation to face the terrible ordeal of battle under modern conditions is equally deserving of them.

At first sight it may appear very cruel and very repugnant that one in the young early pride of life, possibly

with a promise of a fine career open before him and with many ties of love and friendship, should of his own free will and volition be carried across the sea, brought face to face with the modern and monstrous engines of war and be subjected to the chance of perishing unrecorded among a multitude of others. The old legends of fame and glory do not fit into his case. He came out of obscurity, he fights in obscurity and dies in obscurity. Is there any consolation for such a fight? The answer, dim though it may first appear, is very decidedly in the affirmative. It is found, first of all, in that noble instinct of humanity which at the warning of danger to the State urges the citizen forth to do and dare his best. Like the Light Brigade at Balaclava, his is "not to reason why." Every soldier cannot be an analytic philosopher, but it is sufficient for him that the inspiration of philosophy lies somewhere at the back of his mind and, without finding expression in words, urges him to noble action. There is nothing derogatory in claiming partnership with the lower animals in this. On the contrary, to do so shows that Nature for her own wise purpose has planted deep in the individual an instinct for preserving the race. At times a whole herd of animals will join together to repel an aggressor. They do so blindly, furiously and without reason, moved only by the unspoken solicitude for the life of their tribe.

Man, being reasonable, brings consideration to the performance. He weighs one thing with another and subjects his natural impulse to analysis that may be rough and ready with one, while it is close and meticulous with another. In the end he recognises that he has stumbled upon the right path, just as a man who without consideration hits out in favour of some oppressed weakling, has performed the action before properly considering it. If he stopped to think the matter out, the occasion for his intervention would have gone before he came to a decision. Hence the necessity at times of acting upon what appears to be blind instinct. But it would be a great mistake to imagine that the end of patriotism is an obscure and almost unnoticed end. It is the solace of men who have grown old or become afflicted with disease, or in some other way are brought face to face with the final enemy of mankind, to console themselves with the very just reflection that what was best in them has been transmitted to their children, and will be again carried forward by them to future generations, so that the life of the individual, though it may have no tangible achievement to show at the moment, is, nevertheless, a vital influence shaping and helping the progress of the race. That effect is achieved still more directly by the man who gives all for the good of his country. He need never fear that the act will not be remembered. If he be in the forefront, occupying, as it were, the eye of the spectators, his deeds will become part of history and be recounted over and over again as part of the fortunes of his race. In his degree his humblest follower shares this advantage. His bones may lie in an unknown, nameless grave, with nothing to point to it as his particular resting place, but his children and his children's children, or if not them those who claim kinship in this and future generations, will always look back with pride and memory to the progenitor or member of their family who sallied forth and fought for the common weal at its need. And, further, their influence is carried far onward. A state that in a time of danger has roused itself and brought out its citizens to show their valour and perform manly deeds for the common weal, becomes henceforth an example and an inspiration to all communities similarly placed. That state has helped forward the rest of the world. The cowardly or inefficient state has used what influence it has to put a drag upon advancement and civilisation. This, we think, is what must have been in the mind of Pericles when he said that it was not what was graven on the stone that mattered, but what was "without visible symbol, woven into the stuff of other men's lives."

Our Frontispiece

WE publish this week a portrait of Lady Rachel Sturgis, second daughter of Lord Wharncliffe, who married Mr. Mark Sturgis last year.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



NOTES.

NO doubt the Admiralty were perfectly right in restricting the news about the Zeppelin raid on London to the few official lines that were issued on Tuesday morning. The significant sentence in their statement is that "many fires are reported, but these cannot be absolutely connected with visits of airships." The majority of readers, who drew their own conclusions, were relieved to find from a later message of the Admiralty, that the whole of the fires had been caused by bombs. Thus the situation does not create the sensationalism for which such an event would provide many papers with an excuse. These occasional visits of aircraft to this country are no doubt meant to be to London what the groups of Uhlans were to Belgium and France when they were sent to create a certain terrorism before the arrival of the main army. The inhabitants of London are not likely to yield to a show of this kind. The visit of the Zeppelins will only have the effect of making every one of them a keen and watchful observer of what takes place and a ready co-operator with the civil and military forces used by the Government.

IN Professor Wood's authoritative and interesting contribution to the discussion of the relative feeding values of milk and eggs he does not deal with their relative digestibility. Yet it may account for the popular instinct. The comparison is made between a pint of milk weighing, roughly, 1½ lb. and an egg weighing 2 oz. Our heroic forefathers reckoned their drinks by the pint, or even by the quart; but the modern prefers his glass or half-pint. It will, we think, be found that in those luncheon shops which attract the very economical, a glass of milk is the standard. Milk taken by itself and gulped down is not at all easily digested, for reasons which all know and experts have explained. Professor Wood finds that the feeding value of a pint of milk is equal to that of about four and a half eggs, but the weight of a pint of milk alone is equal to that of ten eggs. Breeders of show dogs are well aware what this implies. They know that their puppies thrive much better on their mother's milk, which is rich and concentrated, than on cow's milk, which is comparatively thin, and must be taken in larger quantities.

AMONG the special articles in the 1914 volume of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society is one by Mr. C. Winckworth Allen on the Housing of the Labourer. Mr. Allen refers appreciatively to our work in organising the National Competition for Cottage Designs last year, and raises an interesting point when he challenges the wisdom of adopting what he calls "the accepted type of plan." This was the outcome of the Report of the Committee on Small Holdings, which recommends a large kitchen-living room, a small scullery and three bedrooms as the minimum accommodation consistent with decency. Everyone agrees that a small parlour is a most desirable addition, but it means extra cost which few landowners can afford. The main danger in the accepted type is that the big kitchen-living room will be left unused save on festivals, and that the real living-room will be the scullery. Our attitude has been that this is overcome if the scullery is so planned as a passage room that it cannot be lived in for lack of space.

MR. ALLEN suggests alternatively that a parlour, however small, should always be provided, that the sink (usually fixed in the scullery) shall be placed in the kitchen

living room, and the boiler (with the bath, if one be provided) in a little room under the main roof to be used only as a wash-house, and that the staircase should rise from the neighbourhood of the back door rather than from inside the front door. This disposition of the equipment of the cottage means that washing-up would have to be done in the kitchen-living room. Mr. Allen thinks there is "nothing particularly obnoxious" about this, but anyone conversant with the domestic economy of the labourer's wife will recognise that it means an almost perpetual litter of dirty plates and dishes, which the scullery plan avoids. It may be that there is no objection on sanitary grounds, given an adequate "stench-trap" to the sink, but Mr. Allen seems to forget the nature of water in which green vegetables have been boiled. However, he has made a thoughtful contribution to a great problem, and we hope his alternative plan will have wide trial. We need only add that the reports received as to the COUNTRY LIFE cottages so far built are uniform in the expression of the cottagers' delight in the planning and equipment of their new homes.

THE Board of Agriculture, which has shown itself very prudent and alert since the outbreak of war, has issued a notice to all occupiers of land requesting that the schedules for the annual crop and stock returns should be promptly filled in. It would be worth some expense to carry the enquiry further than usual. Every consideration suggests that the country should be prepared, as far as the food supply goes, for a winter campaign. Dearness of food is certain in any case, and the most effective way to ameliorate its effect is for every available inch of land to be made to grow what it is capable of growing. The Board should make it a point to ascertain where this has been neglected, and do so while there is yet time to rectify the omission. It is not by any means too late. We all remember last year. War did not begin till August, yet many people, acting on the excellent advice of the Royal Horticultural Society, managed by prompt sowing and planting to increase the food supply perceptibly. This year, no doubt, the majority have taken time by the forelock; yet, owing to the scarcity of labour and other causes, such as the drought, which has prevented many seeds from coming away, there is plenty to do. Armies, it has been said, fight on the stomach. So do nations. Whoever increases the production of food is doing something for the war.

DEVOIR.

Night and a thousand stars!
Beyond?—we may not ask:
Better to hide the scars,
Better to wear the mask,

Softly to play the bars,
Boldly to do the task,
Till broken lie the jars
And emptied is the cask.

ARTHUR HOLMES.

NEXT to human food in war time is that of the horses, and the horses' harvest is just about to begin. In other words, the hay in the Southern Counties is just about ready for cutting. Very anxiously is it scanned this year; in the first place, because the farmer depends upon it for a very considerable share of his income, and, in the second place, because hay is a necessity of the Army horses. At the present moment the stocks are running low, and those who send their hay to market by road are liable to have the consignment stopped and commandeered by the Government. Nominally, the price paid for hay taken in this way is the same as that given in the locality; but hay farmers say that they do not get from the Government what they would expect in Whitechapel. However, the new supply will be in shortly, and we hope there will be enough and to spare even after the farmers have parted with that one-twenteenth of the entire crop which our Army requires. The prospect of the hay harvest improved vastly after the heavy rains which came about the middle of May. Up till then the crop had suffered badly from the April drought, but now it seems likely to be at least an average one.

THOMAS CARLYLE said in his old age, when he came to know more about Greek writers than had come to him in his youth, that if he had read them earlier he would have been saved the trouble of writing many of his essays, because they had said the right thing on the subject two thousand years

ago. A correspondent of the *Times* the other day produced a passage from Demosthenes that applies in a most extraordinary manner to present conditions. He tells his fellow-countrymen that "you must take the business in hand yourselves, if you look for success." He urges them to "serve personally, leaving nothing undone," and he asks pertinently : " Which of you is so simple as not to know that the war yonder will soon be here, if we are indifferent ? " He goes on in this strain, adjuring them to "serve in person with alacrity, and censure no one till the goal is achieved." The following sentence might have been written yesterday : " Never will I advise that we give to idlers and shirkers the wage of the diligent, or sit still, waiting to hear of victories others have won." Here is a wisdom of the ancients that the present generation might advantageously take to heart.

SOME time ago we had occasion to mention the fact that well as the little towns in the North of England and, the South of Scotland have answered to the call of the country, the rural districts have been uncommonly backward. A class of labouring men, than whom there is none more vigorous or fitter to take the field in Great Britain, have, nevertheless, shirked the issue. From one of the local papers we learn that Captain Balfour of Newton Don has taken the frank and open course of mentioning in a public speech, a number of the farms from which no recruits have come. In the two counties of Berwickshire and Roxburgh there are still four thousand men of military age who have not joined the army. The names of the farms from which no recruits have gone would convey little to our readers, though many of them are notable in Border history as homes of reivers and moss-troopers in the old days of fray and foray. But they are remote from towns and the men do not come much into communication with one another. This is the most charitable explanation of their backwardness ; but Captain Balfour's uncontradicted statement is about as good an argument for universal service as could well be conceived. It is infamous that strong and able men should stand idly by and reap the benefit of the valour of those who have volunteered to serve.

THE Midland Reafforestation Association is an energetic and enterprising body, which has done much to redeem the Black Country from desolation by the planting of trees. Excellent, though brief, is the account of their proceedings in the new number of the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. It will interest our readers to know that after ten years of careful observation it has been possible to make a list of trees which give good results in the conditions prevalent in the Black Country. The species to which pride of place must be allotted is the black alder, which is as numerous as all the rest put together. The writer comments on the contrast between our usual vision of the black alder growing by the waterside and apparently being equally happy on a mound of pit rubbish. He thinks the explanation is probably to be found in the curious matted formation of the alder's root, which has the effect of holding the water in the soil. The other trees which have been found to succeed in a lesser degree, are the white alder, the black Italian poplar, willows of sorts, the wych elm, the birch, the ash and the sycamore. A very good point about the work of the Association is that care has been taken, wherever possible, to have plantations near schools, so that the children can reap the practical advantage of studying them on the spot.

PROBABLY only a very small proportion of the general public recognise the great importance of the new Spirits Restriction Act. Indeed, we have heard it said that the amount of raw spirit sold is comparatively small and that the compulsory bonding of it for three years will not make much difference. Now, those who talk in this way must be very ignorant of the facts. In the course of a year about twenty-five million gallons of spirits are consumed in this country, and of this total nine millions are absolutely raw spirits. The difference between raw spirits and matured spirits is very well known to those who have tried both. It is a fact that certain classes of labourers in the North prefer whisky that has got what they call a "grip" in it. On one occasion the present writer remembers giving a coalman a glass of methylated spirits instead of whisky. His only remark after he had emptied his glass was that it was "graud stuff." But, in truth, raw spirits are the most poisoning and most maddening drink imaginable, and there is very little doubt of the experts being right when they anticipate that this new law, due to the initiative of Mr.

Lloyd George, will accomplish a visible and radical reform in the drinking habits of the people.

A SPLENDID example of the soldier-sportsman, in the person of Captain Francis Grenfell, has met with a soldier's death. He was the first officer in the British army to receive the Victoria Cross in the present war, the distinction being given, according to the *Gazette*, "For gallantry in action against unbroken infantry at Andregnies, Belgium, on August 24, 1914; and for gallant conduct in assisting to save the guns of the 110th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, near Doubon, the same day." Twice after that had Captain Francis Grenfell to return to England on account of wounds. On May 24th he met his death in the field. He and his brother, the late Captain Riversdale Grenfell, will long be remembered as fine sportsmen, but particularly as two of the greatest polo players of their day. The two brothers formed the Old Etonian side which won so many distinctions in the game, and in 1910 this side offered to go to America to bring back the Cup, but the proposal fell through owing to Captain Francis Grenfell's steeplechasing accident. This kept him out of polo in 1912, but in the following year he played better than ever. It will be remembered that Captain Riversdale Grenfell was killed in action on September 14th.

FESTIVAL.

'Er's gwine to bake a tatie-cake, 'er be !
'Er's gwine to make a brave big saffern bun—
And all for 'e !

No gurt shakes, neither, so the neighbours 'llow,
But there ! 'Tis wiped out—all the wrong 'e done—
'E's 'ero, now !

"Nigh broke 'er 'eart ?" Well, maybe, in the past ;
But, now 'e 've 'listed, 'e 'ave found a way
To mend 'en fast !

So 'er be bakin' tatie-cake, 'er be :
('Er don't care farden what the neighbours say !)
'Tis all for 'e !

LILLIAN GARD.

GERMANY'S reply to the American Note is incredibly cynical and evasive. The chief points raised by Mr. Bryan are carefully ignored, and an attempt is made to get up a controversy as to whether the Lusitania was or was not carrying munitions of war and armour. These allegations had been contradicted in the most decisive manner both by Great Britain and the United States. The only reason for raising them was that it opened a chance of starting an enquiry and creating delay. A few days ago the Majestic, on its way out, when it could not possibly be carrying either troops or munitions of war, was attacked—a fact that proves the insincerity of Germany's quibbling argument. Indeed, the whole purpose appears to be to involve President Wilson in a controversy during which the proceedings of which he made complaint would be carried on as usual. In the present temper of the United States, it is scarcely to be believed that the President will walk into the trap set so openly. All that he need to do is to adhere to the terms of the American Note and insist upon receiving a direct answer to the points raised before entering upon any other enquiry. Evidently the Germans have reckoned up the situation as one in which they have to do with an antagonist who will not fight.

IN another part of this issue Mr. Avray Tipping gives a very charming account of the feeding of school children in a Welsh village. The place is known among the natives as Eglwys Fach, which is, being Englished, Little Church. It is a hamlet in North Wales situated among a nest of small holdings, some of them two or three miles distant. From the lonely cottages the children come every day to school, and it has been customary to provide them with the very uncomfiting dinner which used to be prevalent in the rural districts—a hunch of bread and cheese, a bottle of milk or, failing that, of cold tea. The Lady Bountiful of the parish has hit upon a much better way. She has improvised a restaurant out of a little-used inn, and at this each child may for a modest penny partake of a dinner of which our readers will doubtless read the very appetising particulars given by Mr. Tipping. We do not wonder that it makes the mouths of those who live in the village street water and that the penny dinner is a most popular institution at Eglwys Fach. By far the most valuable feature of the plan lies in a simplicity which renders it easy to be copied in other places.

VENICE AND HER TREASURES.

BY SIR MARTIN CONWAY.

THAT Italy should have come into the war as our ally is, of course, matter of satisfaction to all her lovers, but it is a satisfaction tempered with fear. For Italy is the trustee of so much that all the civilised world holds dear—the priceless treasures of art bequeathed to her by her ancestors of so many bygone generations. The very landscape of Italy is precious, and even her smaller and remoter towns contain monuments not to be paralleled elsewhere. Thus little Cividale, close to the Austro-Italian frontier and on one of the main highroads leading north-east out of the plain of Venetia, is alone worth more than money could repay; and Cividale has heard the guns. Cividale, Udine, Aquileia, Grado—how pleasantly the names slip from the tongue, and what charming memories each evokes in those who really know their Italy. But the light of all of them pales into insignificance before the sun-bright glory of Venice—Venice which all the world worships and everyone knows to be unique. Even Rheims, splendid as it was, was only one of several superb Gothic cathedrals of the highest rank, but Venice is not one of several, not even one of two. It stands alone in the world; there is no city like it. Once, indeed, Venice did not stand so unrivalled, but that was before the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. The old Constantinople of East Imperial days has been wiped out by the unspeakable Turk, excepting only her central gem, the church of Hagia Sophia, and that is but a shell, swept and garnished of all the fair furniture it was designed to hold and to set off. Venice is, as it were, a piece of old Constantinople preserved in the pious west, whereby we are able to learn what Constantinople once was like. That was the great Venice—the Venice of the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries—the Venice of St. Mark's and the Doge's Palace, and the Byzantine and early Gothic palaces along the Grand Canal. Time has worn much of that older Venice away, but what remains of it includes, perhaps, the most precious of all the buildings that now stand anywhere together, still in use, on the face of the earth.

The glory of Venice is St. Mark's. Hagia Sophia may be a yet more beautiful building, but St. Mark's is a building with its treasures complete within. Both are essentially Byzantine buildings, one representing the first great epoch of Byzantine splendour, the other expressing the revived glories of the Byzantine Renaissance. But whereas Hagia Sophia was built

at one effort, St. Mark's was a growth. Two earlier churches stood successively on its site. The third is more perfect than either. The brick core of it was begun about the time of our Norman Conquest, and from that day till the sixteenth century almost every generation added to the beauty and wealth of the monument. Wherever victorious Venetian fleets penetrated they brought home some precious marbles, some finely carved capitals, or other rare objects to be built into the shrine of "their own Evangelist." If they plundered it was not after Teutonic fashion for destruction's sake, but in order to create. The brick walls of St. Mark's are now wholly covered with fair marbles, many of them inlaid with sculpture or mosaic. The façade is adorned by scores of columns and capitals, some of them of exceeding rareness. The interior vaults are wholly lined with mosaic. All the altars, the lamps, the pulpits, the galleries, are precious as in no other church, and many of them have come from unrecorded eastern shrines. Sometimes they are built up out of fragments, preserved and re-used in new combinations and now venerable in their reassemblage. No interior in the world can compare with that of St. Mark's for splendour. The subdued lustre of gold, the rich harmony of colour in marble, porphyry and glass, the bronze lamps and doors, the fine sculpture in many materials—all are rich, all are rare, and every detail is historically interesting. If we could know whence came and who brought each marble panel or porphyry shaft which now finds its almost perfect position in the complex whole, we should by them alone be able to form a catalogue of the

great men and great deeds of Venice. Yet even more wonderful than the objects themselves is the art whereby they have been combined into this incredible whole, this matchless unity, this summary of the passions and strivings and adorations of half a thousand years, and those the centuries that included the crusades and the great age of chivalry and the making of Europe.

Now St. Mark's as well as Hagia Sophia is imperilled by the curse of this deadly war, in which are opposed in a life and death struggle the two everlastingly hostile ideals—the ideal that made such things as St. Mark's and Rheims, and, indeed, all that is fair and lovely and of good report in Europe and America, and the ideal that would carelessly destroy all such things and replace them by laboratories and factories and the horrible efficiencies and incredulities



A BYZANTINE CAPITAL AT SAN VITALI, RAVENNA.

*J. Shaw.*

THE SCREEN AND NORTH PULPIT OF ST. MARK'S.

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of science. For that is the true meaning of this war : the contest of Science against Faith, of the Concrete against the Abstract, of a world of formulæ and equations against a world of mystery and fancy and art. Of that world of mystery Venice stands in our day as the first and noblest expression. Even German lovers used to flock thither in the days of their young romance. It makes the blood boil to think that those very people would not hesitate to send shells hurtling into the midst of the beauty they were by mental structure incapable of apprehending.

The foundation of Venice was caused by the invasion of the older Huns, the Huns who could not help being barbarians of the lowest class because they never had had a chance to be civilised. They came raging and ravaging down into Italy, and the people of Aquileia fled from their fury and took refuge on the islands among the lagoons, where they founded first Torcello and then Rialto (afterwards called Venice). Torcello still remains, like a stranded vessel of an ancient type, upon its sandbank, with churches that look older than they are, but yet are ancient enough.

incredible fascination of the Doge's palace, with its tessellated wall, faintly pink, above the lace-like interlacings of the wonderful colonnade, which Ruskin revealed to the admiration of the world ! How it all draws together and leads the gliding gondola on to the mouth of the Grand Canal, that water highway fringed with palaces where sea and city meet and blend ! Palace after palace, Byzantine, Gothic, Renaissance, succeed one another, each like the home of a fairy prince, glittering with broken reflected lights from below. Here there is a little garden where pinks blossom on the parapet and oleanders peep over the walls. And there is a little courtyard with its carved well-head in the midst, and other little palaces looking down upon it all around. Everywhere is some attractive detail, some bit of exotic carving framed aloft on a house façade, a mere writhing, perhaps, of two clasped beasts, or a couple of birds flanking a vase, or a Byzantine emperor within a round medallion—spoil from some far away victory which the owner of the palace brought home and affixed for remembrance of a great deed of war. The little canals, too, with their endless bendings



ON THE SCREEN AT TORCELLO CATHEDRAL.

The soil of Torcello yields carved stones that may have come from Aquileia itself, and below them yet older antiquities, going back even as far as the days when Mediterranean commerce was in the hands of Mycenæan people.

Venice, Torcello, Murano, Malamocco, Chioggia—how they sing through one's memory ! For these places capture the affection of everyone as no other place can. Even Italy cannot rival them elsewhere. Florence, Rome, Capri, Palermo—lovely and fair as they are—possess no equal fascination, nor do Como, nor the Alps, nor Geneva's lake, nor the cathedral cities of France, love them as we may. Venice is above and beyond them all, the very centre and kernel of the beauty of the world. A day in Venice is an epoch in the lifetime of any really living person, anyone not wholly dead to beauty, anyone with a soul not altogether atrophied. That wonderful lagoon, so sunny, so still, with the graceful boats strewn about and the matchless tower of St. George and the Campanile reflected to left and right in the mirror of the land-locked sea ! The

and twinings, how delightful they are ! Each house that is reflected in them different from its neighbour, different in date, in style, in size—answering the special needs and likings of a particular man or family and no other. What glimpses we get through door and window into dark, mysterious passages and chambers, within which surely no ordinary men and women can dwell ! Here, if anywhere, should be the home of romance, of the unexpected, the unusual, the unimagined.

That, after all, is the key-note of Venice to the foreigner—Romance ! If we were to live there it would go, no doubt, as it is liable to vanish from the Alps and the sea and the desert when we become too familiar with them. The worst of living too long and seeing too much is that everything is liable to become commonplace in these dangerously material days. We no sooner become conscious of what seems to be a mystery than we must needs examine and explain it and drive the mystery away ; and with the mystery gone romance vanishes also. What a loss ! For life has nothing so precious



A. Keighley.

THE CAMPANILE, CHIOGGIA.

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to give as romance, which is a state of mind the very reverse of scientific understanding. It is romance that gives to youth its glory, to manhood its ideal, and gilds the memories of old age for those who have preserved the rare jewel of that power. For most people romance is banished from their every-day life, gone beyond recall from their homes. Such can only for a brief spell recover it by wandering forth into some new world. They may find it in music or in the drama till those also become stale, or they may catch a renewed glimpse of it in some flaming sunset or a sudden vista of snowy mountains. But it is at Venice that they are most sure to come up with romance once more and so renew the thrill of childhood if only for a moment in their *blasé* hearts.

It is remarkable that the love which all the world now bears towards Venice should be a modern emotion. The strangeness of the place was always famed abroad, but of its beauty we read little or no mention in the older writers. Coryat and such travellers were more amused by Venetian society than by Venice itself; yet the city must have been more resplendently beautiful in their day than ever since, for later centuries have seen a sad destruction of its beauties and a replacement of many a rare feature by the ordinary. It is easy now to realise that the culmination of the beauty of Venice must have come about the beginning of the sixteenth century, at which time the Hungarian, Albert Dürer, spent a year within it, and we possess the letters he then wrote home to his friends. In none of them does he make any reference to the beauty of Venice. Yet, if it is glorious now in its decay, what must it have been then, when it was alive with an art inspired folk, splendidly dressed and magnificent in their ways of life and their almost continuous ceremonials. Even the Renaissance was splendid in Venice and left the old work respectfully unharmed. That period was followed by one of sordid neglect and indifference which lasted almost

down to the days of Ruskin. Turner and other English artists, indeed, had preceded him and had interpreted the beauty of Venice in their pictures and drawings; but he first, with any power and emphasis, made the stones of Venice appeal in language to the ears and through them presently to the eyes of men. Turner taught Ruskin, Ruskin taught England, and England taught the world to see Venice for what she is; and only just in time, for the days of great peril for her were come, and there was barely time to save what threatened to vanish away after centuries of neglect. The renewed interest was at first rather injurious than salutary, as the destructive restoration of the Fondaco dei Turchi still glaringly demonstrates. But a better understanding followed, with the result that St. Mark's was rescued none too soon, and the Doge's Palace likewise, and many another old *casa* or *palazzo* that would have been pulled or fallen down had the old indifference continued.

And now all is in peril at Venice as at Constantinople, and any day we may hear of some ghastly tragedy—a bomb on St. Mark's, a shell in the Doge's Palace, a torpedo under the Rialto. Such knowledge is not ours only but still more keenly realised by our Italian Allies. It will add strength to their patriotism and will make them yet more determined to conquer and keep the hated enemy off their sacred soil. That they may be enabled so to do will be the prayer of every lover of things beautiful. With Reims and Louvain for object lessons we have had proof enough of what Teutonic "Kultur" holds to be consistent with its ideas of civilisation. True civilisation and Kultur are poles asunder, and the one is essentially hostile to the other. Venice is the most glorious and perfect shrine of all that is best in human achievement. Civilisation stands for that. It follows that Teutonism is by its very nature hostile to all that we prize in Venice. If we would preserve the treasure we must destroy its enemy. There is no other way.

LITERATURE.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

The War Speeches of William Pitt the Younger. Selected by R. Coupland, M.A. (Clarendon Press.)

AT this moment nothing could be more timely than the publication of William Pitt's war speeches. Among English statesmen he stands pre-eminent for the purity of his conduct at a time when the virtue was so uncommon as to be surprising, and by the noble disinterestedness of his patriotism. The analogy between the times in which he lived and our own scarcely needs that we should draw attention to it. Before the long Continental War broke out Britain had been experiencing a prosperity hitherto unexampled. William Pitt's inclination lay all in the direction of peace and the increase of this prosperity, but movements were being germinated in Europe which it was impossible for him either to grasp or control. By the irony of fate, he was almost the only man among his contemporaries to perceive that there could be nothing better for Britain than an alliance with France. When he negotiated an Anglo-French commercial treaty in 1786 he argued vigorously against the common belief that France was and must be the unalterable enemy of Britain. Unalterable enmity between nations he described as "a weak and foolish conception having no foundation either in the experience of nations or in the history of man." The close neighbourhood of the two countries, the fact that the industries of the one supplemented the resources of the other, and the great advantages of an understanding between them, he set forth with the clear persuasiveness which was his gift. History has shown that he was right in principle, although he failed to estimate the forces of the Revolution at their true value. In 1792 he calculated that peace was ensured for fifteen years at least, and he hoped during that interval to perfect and consummate the financial policy which he had so successfully introduced during his first nine years of government. His speech, delivered in support of his Budget proposals in 1792, might have formed a part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's survey in 1913. For example, he said, just as it was argued before the war broke out, that

The rude wants of countries emerging from barbarism and the artificial and increasing demands of luxury and refinement will equally open new sources of treasure and new fields of exertion, in every state of society and in the remotest quarters of the globe.

His financial speeches are as profitable reading as those devoted to the subject of war. William Pitt had that love of simplicity and clearness which lies at the bottom of great statesmanship. In all things he disliked taking too sanguine a view, and we find him measuring the resources of the country and their possibilities with the moderation of a business man who is taking stock of a situation for the purpose of guiding his own action. William Pitt differed from a great many people in this, that while the majority are loose and often optimistic about facts and figures belonging to a corporation, they are keen and critical in everything that relates to themselves. When the country was concerned Pitt's vigilant economy could not be surpassed; if only his own interests were at stake he could be as careless as the most thoughtless of the squires and country gentlemen of the eighteenth century. When war was practically forced on England and he was obliged to change his attitude towards France, it is still most refreshing to read his speeches. He avoided by instinct the loud declamatory language then in common use, and he appealed to rhetoric less than any man of his time. Of course, his speeches are not reported with the exactitude attained at a later time, and it may be that even when he revised the reports there was something lost in the glow or smoothness of the periods; but there can be no doubt that the substance was preserved, and this is sufficient to let us see how carefully and judiciously the great statesman weighed the unfavourable as well as the favourable aspects of the question he was discussing. He leaves the impression, above all else, of a keen intellect focused on realities, discarding as it were instinctively, all fantastic wire-drawn theories and suggestions and getting right to the heart of the matter. Among the statesmen of his time there was no one who more fully realised the necessity that England should hold the supremacy of the sea. The later school of German historians have represented England as cowardly, and standing aside while Continental Powers fought out their disputes. This comes very badly from any native of Prussia, which was the most treacherous and the most selfish of the Powers at that time. But, at any rate, Pitt's policy was forced upon him by the facts of the case. We had no army in England large enough to cope on equal terms with those

of the Continent ; but the fleet was the strongest in the world, and it gave a command of the sea which ultimately proved the saving of Great Britain and the undoing of those who had striven for her ruin. In the early years of last century, when Britain was really faced with the possibility of an invasion, we find Pitt working in his own simple, homely way at the provision of adequate means for withstanding hostile assault. Some interesting facts about the condition of England at the time emerge from his speeches. When, for instance, trying to set up a new force of irregular cavalry, he had to estimate the number of horses which were kept for pleasure throughout the kingdom, and found that they amounted to 200,000, of which 120,000 belonged to persons who kept only one horse, the rest to persons who some of them kept ten and various other proportions. He wanted all those who could shoot "to form bodies of men who from their useful dexterity in using firearms" might be able to harass the enemy. He alluded partly to gamekeepers, but also to gentlemen who "are gamekeepers for their own amusement." He arrived at the numbers by ascertaining what gun licences had been taken out. These amounted to 7,000. However, interesting as these details are, they are of slight importance compared with the circumstances of greatest importance, namely, that William Pitt, at a time when the fortunes of Britain seemed to be at their lowest ebb, interpreted the dogged will of his countrymen by standing with his back to the wall, utilising every resource at his disposal, and resolved to sell his blood dearly if that were the only alternative. As it happened, the Battle of Trafalgar was fought and the chance of an invasion faded away ; but William Pitt was not to reap the benefit of it. On November 13th, 1805, Napoleon entered Vienna after Mack had surrendered with the greater part of his army at Ulm. Pitt's hope was that Prussia would join the coalition, and he offered to pay on generous terms for every man Prussia put into the field against Napoleon. But, as our author says, it is true that, but for Prussian selfishness, the results of Leipzig, if not of Waterloo, might have been achieved in 1805, and Europe might have been saved from ten years of wholesale bloodshed and destruction.

Thus the prospect looked very black when William Pitt, worn out with anxiety, died on January 23rd, 1806, exclaiming : " My country ! How I leave my country ! " He did not at that moment realise all that he had himself done, and for his true valediction we must go back to the brief reply made by him at the Lord Mayor's banquet on November 9th, 1805, when the Lord Mayor had proposed his health as the saviour of Europe. All the greatness, majesty and sincerity of the man shine in this brief speech :

I return you many thanks for the honour you have done me ; but Europe is not to be saved by any single man. England has saved herself by her exertions, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example.

If any comment upon this is required it will be found in one which Thomas Hardy put into the Spirit of the Years :

Those words of this man Pitt—his last large words,
As I may prophesy—that ring to-night
In their first mintage to the feasters here,
Will spread with ageing, ledge, and crystallize,
And stand embedded in the English tongue
Till it grow thin, outworn, and cease to be.
So is't ordained by That Which all ordains ;
For words were never winged with apter grace,
Or blent with happier choice of time and place,
To hold the imagination of this strenuous race.

The Ink-Slinger, by Rita. (Stanley Paul.)

RITA'S latest novel supplies a valuable lesson in the disadvantage of overstating your case. Her theme is the hard lot of authors, and she tries to show how "the pathway of genius is set with sharp flints and beset by cruel snares" owing to the iniquity of publishers. Her hero, Wroth Fermoy, a brilliant and feckless Irishman, has a book published by Isaacson, who gives him £100 for it, and induces him to sign an agreement for his next five books on the same terms. The book is a huge success, and Isaacson insists on his pound of flesh. Additional evidence is provided by a "symposium of authors," who pour forth stories of falsified accounts, manuscripts deliberately lost and other horrors. No doubt there have been hard cases and unscrupulous publishers, but we do not think that publishers as a class are nearly so wicked, nor, as a rule, nearly so rich, as Rita would have them. "He lives in Park Lane," cries Wroth Fermoy. "He commands funkeys. His wife and daughter go to Court ! And his unfortunate authors are living on bread and cheese and toiling and moiling to supply him with all this," and so on. This is melodrama altogether too lurid, and Rita does her case no good by it. In one of Sir Rider Haggard's early books, "Mr. Meeson's Will," there was a publisher rather like Isaacson, who kept his tame authors in "hutches" and battened on the proceeds of their brains. Mr. Meeson did not seem very real, but since the author in that case was only trying to tell an entertaining story, and not to lead a crusade, this did not greatly matter. Here it does matter that we really cannot believe in Isaacson. Sir

Rider Haggard's book, like Rita's, contained an account of a *cause célèbre*, and as he had had experience of the Probate Court he made not only an amusing, but also a reasonably lifelike scene of it. Rita, on the other hand, has, we must conclude, drawn chiefly on her imagination, eked out perhaps by recollections of "Bleak House" and the Trial Scene in "Pickwick." The present reviewer in some years of briefless wanderings through the Courts never came across a case in which questions of law and fact were presented in so inextricable a muddle to an unfortunate jury, while one of the parties when in the witness box was allowed to rove at large over the whole field of copyright law. It may be added that counsel do not make their speeches in the same language as their pleadings and allude to a book throughout as "the said book." Rita is sincere and in earnest, and a practised story-teller ; and many of her faithful readers may very likely enjoy this story, but it is to be hoped they will not take it too seriously as a picture of real life. If they do, the windows of many innocent and virtuous publishers may be in danger.

Quaker Women, by Mabel Richmond Brailsford. (Duckworth.)

THIS title makes one think of Elizabeth Fry ; but the book deals with women who were identified with the very beginnings of Quaker history—with Elizabeth Hooton, Margaret Fell (who became the wife of George Fox), Mary Fisher, Barbara Blanddone and Jane Stuart. To the ordinary reader these names suggest nothing, yet theirs is a remarkable history, and it is admirably told here. From the first, women were quite as important in the movement as men, and some of their methods were surprisingly like what we have seen ourselves. Moved by the spirit, they went to the church service and "spoke to the priest," which meant that they interrupted and rebuked the astonished and angry clergyman ; when sent to prison, they adopted in some cases a hunger-strike. Their courage and devotion were admirable. In spite of the obscurity of most of the sectaries, both Elizabeth Hooton and Margaret Fell had frequent interviews with Charles II to ask his protection for Quakers ; they waylaid him at the tennis court or in the parks. The boldness of the suitors is remarkable, and so are the accessibility and patience of the king. Mary Fisher pleaded before a more distant ruler. It is actually true that this young English girl made her way to Adrianople in 1657 and there preached the doctrine of George Fox to the "Grand Turk," Mahomet IV. She was treated with respect, and found her way back to England. One other of these astonishing women must be mentioned. When Mary Stuart sat on the English throne with her Dutch husband, her sister Jane, a natural daughter of James II, who had been brought up at Court till she was twenty-five, was living at Wisbech, where she earned her living by field-work in summer and spinning flax in winter. When her father was driven out, she made her way to Wisbech, lived the life of the humblest peasant for more than half a century, and died in 1742 at Wisbech, where her grave is still shown. She had been a convinced Quaker before the Revolution. Thus there is no lack of romance in the material, and the authoress has done it full justice by her skilful arrangement and excellent style.

The Irish Nuns at Ypres. (Smith, Elder.)

IN 1665 the Bishop of Ypres founded there a Benedictine abbey. Seventeen years later Lady Flavia Cary was chosen as the first Irish Lady Abbess, and from that time onwards the community of the Irish Dames has remained at Ypres till compelled to fly by the bombardment which laid their beloved abbey in ruins. This book, edited by Mr. Barry O'Brien from the notes of the various Dames, gives an account of their adventures from the time when they first heard the distant guns to their safe arrival at their new sanctuary in Oulton Abbey, in Staffordshire. Not only does it present the realities of war with extraordinary vividness : it gives a beautiful picture of tranquil faith and courage. The style is excellent in its perfect simplicity, and has every now and then a very pleasant touch of humour. There is, for example, a quite delightful description of poor Sister Magdalen, who was very cross at having to turn into a cook, pouring out her woes to Edmund, the old manservant, and arguing with him in the intervals of cooking as to the nationalities of the different aeroplanes that passed overhead : "Edmund being exceedingly short-sighted, and Sister Magdalen not too well versed in such learned matters." One hardly knows which to admire most : the reckless bravery with which three of the Dames went back to Ypres in the teeth of sentries and police, to take one last look at their abbey, or the touching and child-like faith that supported them throughout. There are so many things that one would like to quote, though no quotations can do them justice. Dame Josephine's aspiration was this : "Dear St. Patrick, as you once chased the serpents and venomous reptiles out of Ireland, please now chase the Germans out of Belgium." A little later the nuns were trying, before leaving the abbey, to put some of their most sacred treasures in places of safety, and had, unaided, to lift the throne. "And whether the angels, spreading their wings underneath, took part of the weight away or not, we carried it quite easily." No one can possibly read this book without the truest admiration and sympathy.

THE SENSE OF FUN.

The Little Man and Other Satires, by John Galsworthy. (Heinemann.)

TRUE humour is the rarest of literary commodities, but we never met an author who did not pride himself on possessing it. Mr. Galsworthy has almost every other qualification for satire except that, but the want of it makes his book very dull reading. A real sense of fun, a touch of drollery, a sympathy with whim and hobby, a gift of laughter would have redeemed these pieces from their tiresomeness. When he deals with "the writer" for the purpose of exhibiting him as a bore, it was humour only which could have saved him from boring his readers. "Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand !" Preternatural seriousness, high-mindedness past believing, charity oozing out of his finger-tips, hatred of cruelty, all these admirable gifts are his ; but in satire we call for amusement too, and fail to discover it in the cold, unlaughing eyes of this model of all the virtues. Yet without that saving grace he shall surely be condemned as a writer, however he may shine as a philanthropist.

WILD LIFE ON A SCOTTISH HEATH.

BY E. L. TURNER.

WE started on our voyage at 6 a.m. upon a perfect May morning, three of us, each perched upon new, clean herring barrels; the latter comprised the chief cargo of a little steamer which boasted few comforts for passengers, and no luxuries. As the beautiful coast line faded into the dim distance and we found ourselves fairly launched upon the wide sea, the uppermost thought in our minds was—"What shall we feel like when we see the tree-clad slopes of the Scotch hills again; shall we have succeeded or failed?" But being individually fairly obstinate, there was little thought of failure at that moment. Fourteen hours later, three chastened and shivering people stood wearily shoring up a stone wall, vainly seeking shelter from the keen blasts which swept across the island where we landed, while a driving Scotch mist found out all the weak points in our armour. Thus we waited, while the deliberate Gaul sorted out our luggage and harnessed the pony which was to drag us nine miles inland. But even that final two hours of jolting over a road which was mostly bed-rock failed to crush our aggressively cheerful

impressions, as the cold wet wind whipped stray strands of loosened hair across our faces and into our eyes. But very soon our opinions changed, and long before the end of our two months' residence there we learned to love the place and its gentle, kindly people, and left both it and them with heartfelt regret. The climate can be superb, except when the Atlantic happens to be suffering from one of those fits of "depression" so frequently chronicled by the Clerk of the Weather. When the sun shone it brought out the rich red brown of the heather and turned the grey lochs to sapphire; by and by tiny fragile flowers appeared: sheets of yellow heart's-ease carpeted the sandhills; the common butterwort reared its dainty mauve blossoms everywhere among the moss hags, and these flowers looked so frail in that wind-swept wild, yet were so strong. In June, kingcups opened their golden chalices in the ditches, and later on, yellow iris.

Our lodgings were comfortable, and the smell of the good peat fire was very welcome. The Atlantic crept up to our back doors—an exhausted and subdued ocean, robbed of its energy



Miss E. L. Turner.

WHERE THE ROCK PIPIT NESTS.

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spirits. The "ma-chine" in which we travelled with our lighter luggage was a two-wheeled cart of a somewhat primitive type, drawn by "the wee red mare" whose exact age was lost in a dim, yet heroic past. No amount of encouragement, either with a stick or by means of continuous clacking sounds produced by our driver, and which from that time earned for him the name of "The Stonechat," induced this ancient animal to quicken her slow ambling pace.

Daylight lingered almost up to the time we reached our lodgings at 9.45 p.m., so that there was no gentle twilight to soften the outlines of the desolate landscape as it first presented itself to our jaundiced vision. Great bare hills partially surrounded the island, while the intervening wide waste seemed one vast morass of water and peat bogs; the latter dotted all over with grey boulders, which looked like the giant bones of some extinct animal. As yet the heather showed no signs of new life, and not a single tree, or even a shrub of any size, existed on the desolate heath. It seemed a dead country possessing neither life nor sound of any sort, though now and again the silence would be broken by the sinister caw of a hoodie crow. One's thoughts flew back to an English hedgerow in May, riotous with the "sweet joying" of "all little birds that are," and the dreary waste before us seemed the very epitome of both Milton and Shakespeare. "Blasted Heath!" Such, at any rate, were our first

by the many obstacles barring its way, so that it crawled lazily over the wide stretches of golden sands. The Minch came within half a mile of us on the eastern side. The receding tide left miles of hard sand and saltings in its wake, and these were the resort of many birds. Human dwellers in the outlying farms, cut off from their kind at high tide, could then communicate with the main island, though small streams intersected the sands and had to be forded. At low tide the postman set out on horseback with letters for these isolated homesteads. The wide, firm sands were also used as a parade ground for the local detachment of Lovat's Scouts.

In front of our dining-room window there was a small cultivated patch, called by courtesy a garden, in which, on Midsummer Day, "flaming June" was represented by one blue iris and a row of onions. We watched the slow growth of these humble vegetables with tender pride; the valiant efforts put forth by the slender green shoots were often retarded by the youngest son of the house, who, when he thought himself unobserved, loved to plant a firm bare foot in the centre of each crown.

Early in May, when this bit of ground was newly dug, it attracted a number of reed buntings, a by no means common bird, though fairly well distributed over the island. Corn buntings were numerous, and so domestic that they seemed to

take the place of house sparrows; their wheezing song greeted you from every available post. I once saw about two hundred corn buntings sitting in the one and only tree in the Laird's garden, evidently all huddled together for mutual warmth and protection from a reeking fog which enshrouded the island.

The absence of tits, robins and warblers, and the sparsity of thrushes, made a great silence. But the western side of the island, which consisted largely of corn and grazing lands, abounded in skylarks. I do not think I ever heard so many singing together anywhere else in the British Isles. Tree sparrows were numerous locally. They, as well as the swarms of starlings, nested in holes in the walls of derelict buildings and in crevices of the rocks. But the bird most in evidence on either side of the road and in the vicinity of man was the wheatear. He was at all times and under all circumstances



EXPECTANT.



FIRST EXPERIENCES.

the most cheerful bird that bred there, and his song enlivened the dreary journeys we so frequently had to take along the "Pilgrim's Road." The wheatear shows little respect for the living, and his garrulity is in no wise subdued by the hoary antiquity of cairn or stone circle. To him a monolith is a mere perch, and no more to be revered than any ordinary boulder. His race has survived the unknown builders of those mystic rings, and the scattered stones are his to patter among at will. He fears only the hoodie, who takes a big toll from the wheatears' ranks.

On May 5th we witnessed one of the most beautiful displays of a male wheatear imaginable. We were all three wandering up a rough path when our ears were



Miss E. L. Turner.

RUSHING OUT TO MEET DAD.

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assailed by a loud cry of "Pee-wit," followed by the liquid spring call of a lapwing, when there was none in sight. It was perfect mimicry, and proceeded from a tiny whirling ball of grey and white down, which appeared to be turning somersaults on the top of a wall. It was only a wheatear endeavouring to express his emotions in language other than his own. Sometimes he strutted and fanned his tail, exactly as a miniature peacock might do, then he would hurl himself into the air, hover for a moment, gracefully parachute down, drop on to the wall, and stand there bolt upright and motionless, as gallant and dapper a wheatear as one could wish to see. Apparently he went through this mad performance to please us, and certainly he succeeded, holding us enchanted just five minutes too long, so that the tide had covered the stepping stones, thus necessitating a detour of more than a mile in order to reach our home. But wheatears are always charming, and the fledgelings particularly so. The little family sits expectantly at the entrance to the nesting hole, and directly the parents return with food they dart out to meet them. When confidence in their own powers is gained, the intervals of waiting are occupied with little gambols on the fine rabbit or sheep-bitten turf; but at the least alarm they rush home and hide in their own sheltering tunnel.

Twites are also quite common, and vary considerably in the choice of a nesting site. On May 23rd we found nests



A MALE REED BUNTING.

with eggs placed in furrows in the plough lands, and also in tufts of grass; but usually we found them deep down among the heather.

On June 18th I photographed a twite feeding its young, and on the 21st watched a very confiding pair building in a tuft of rough herbage beside a rock, within 4ft. of another rock upon which I was sitting. The hen continued her work, while the male sat on the next rock and sang loudly, making queer little bows at me. He looked like an operatic singer hurling abuse at his foe in poetic song, which he could not express in sober prosaic speech. After this relief of his feelings he flew away, returning with wool for his mate, which she, however, had to fetch from the rock. This nest was composed of fine grass bents and sheep's wool. The twite depicted on the following page nested on an islet in a big loch. It was one of the few lochs upon which a boat was kept for the convenience of anglers staying at the hotel. Twice I stole the boat and had to row back in response to frantic shouts from the road. But my fellow-sportsmen were unfailingly courteous and kind, took me over again, and called for me on each occasion with unfailing good humour, though once an angler fouled his line, lost his



A FEMALE REED BUNTING AND HER NEST.

hook and muttered things, the exact purport of which I did not catch.

This particular twite was very shy, and as her nest was so deep in the heather, she needed a very long exposure. When birds feed their young by regurgitation, it is the cock's business to find food for the hen during the first few days of brooding. Nestlings fed in this way are slower in developing than those fed direct on insect food, such as the warblers. At seven days of age the young twites were still bare, whereas hedge sparrows can flutter out of the nest on the eighth day.



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THE PLENTIFUL CORN BUNTING.

The male twite refused to face the camera, and frequently sat on a twig some distance away fanning his tail and uttering complaining sounds. This behaviour was repeated on each of the three days I spent near the nest. The hen was very much enraged at this cowardice on the part of her mate, because it necessitated her leaving the young

and searching for food. On one occasion she was absent so long that when she returned they were unresponsive to the food stimulus. After looking anxiously at them she quickly brooded. During the time occupied in reviving the nestlings she evinced considerable discomfort at having to retain food intended for her



A TWITE'S NEST AMONG THE HEATHER.

babies; now and again it oozed from the sides of her bill, and she constantly tried to make the young respond, but half an hour elapsed before they fed. Her disgust at her mate's behaviour was evinced in various ways; sometimes she darted from the nest and pecked him, returning in a state of ruffled plumage curious to behold; now and again she called plaintively. He did collect food for her sometimes, because she would fly off in response to his call and feed the young immediately afterwards; but one day I think he failed



A SKYLARK ON ITS NEST.

gree the fussiness of the pipits in general.

When patterning over the seaweed their dusky bodies tone completely with their surroundings, and any slight depression hides them from view. The male tries to allure the intruder away from the nest, or, rather, one bird does this while the other slips unobserved to the young; as the sexes are alike, it is impossible to say definitely that the deception is practised by the male. The nest is easy enough to discover when the young are hatched and the parents intent on supplying their needs. The old birds drag out from under seaweed all kinds of slimy, succulent morsels with which they feed the young, besides insects of various kinds and things which crawl over marine vegetation.

I watched a pair of rock pipits gathering building material near a bridge close to our home, but did not actually locate the nest till Sunday, the 25th, when I was discovered by the "meenister" birds'-nesting on the Sabbath. Naturally,



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REFUSING TO FACE THE CAMERA.

he remained completely, as he was visible from the side of my tent the whole of the time. This nest was composed of heather twigs and grass bents. All round the tidal estuaries, rock pipits nested, sometimes in rough stone walls, but frequently in tufts of coarse herbage, just above high-water mark.

The rock pipit possesses to an unusual de-

I expected a rebuke, and therefore said "Good morning" effusively. He eyed me critically from a superior height, and, with a twinkle in his eye, then said, "Ye'll be one of the three ledgies come after birds. Why for do ye come to the Gaelic service; its foolish to come when ye cannae grasp a wurrd, and *one* of ye was verra sleepy." This was a hit at Miss Best, who went to sleep the previous Sunday, and had to be prodded up with a hatpin. It was long and somewhat dreary, but to those of us who had never before heard Gaelic singing the whole thing was a revelation. If it be true that the spirit of a nation is revealed in its song, then the Gaelic Psalm-singing is surely the epitome of a race. It is simple plain-song, with a curious rhythmic rising and falling which reminds one of a Greek chorus, and certainly appeals to one's emotions in a peculiar manner. Personally, I knew exactly how a dog feels when it huddles close to a musical instrument and howls. I say this with all reverence, for I wanted to lean my head against the bare whitewashed wall of the little kirk and cry my heart out; but the sublimest music heard in cathedral or opera has never moved me as did this uncultured chanting. When you looked at the rugged, rapt faces of the congregation and then out at the bare, bleak landscape, you realised what life meant for the majority of the people comprising this little crofter community. It is just a bare struggle for the necessities of life, wrested by

continuous toil out of an unkind soil. Away over the sands a bare-legged girl was driving a refractory herd of Highland cows home to one of the isolated farms, only accessible at low tide. The romance and poetry of life, which not even grinding poverty can kill, found expression in this wild, wailing singing.

Yet the Highland youth evidently at times experienced boredom, for the book rail in front of us was scored all over with various hieroglyphics and intertwined initials, etched with pin or pencil. Among these, one sentence, pregnant with possible tragedy, stood out in bold handwriting, "He's going to see her too."

Nevertheless, they are a happy folk. The "simple life," so often extolled by those who have never tried it, was theirs of necessity, and they made the best of it. Being, socially, nearly all on the same level, and closely related by family and clan ties, the joys and griefs of one family were shared by the community. They meet at each other's homes for song and dance, and keep up these innocent orgies till early morning. In the two months of our residence I only saw one drunken man, and he was a public official from a neighbouring island, who, being brought to the police station in an unconscious and battered condition, was quickly washed and brushed up and started afresh upon his round of public service!

THE ELDER AND THE BAGMEN.

BY J. L. DICKIE.

ONE would have hardly thought it would be worth the time expended for commercial travellers to visit Glengollach. Peter Tamson's general shop was the largest emporium in the Glen; he was a Tory of Tories in sticking to a brand he had once proved good; and the wiles of the smart, morning-coated, tall-hatted gentlemen from the nearest town—some fifty miles away—were lost on the dour if worthy Elder.

Dozens of these commercial Napoleons had met their Waterloo in Peter's shop; and if bidden by their over-lords to return and try again, quaked in their shoes before the Lord High Chief Justice air of Peter Tamson. No third visit was ever recorded concerning any of these "impudent buddies," as he called them with sniff contemptuous.

Many a time and oft had he been aghast at the awful temerity of some bagman "blade" who suggested that he should throw out a bow window and adorn it with lingerie and laces, ribbons and camisoles. "Oot of ma shop wi' ye, ye spawn o' the deevil!" was the reply which sent a varied succession of these gentlemen gasping into the village street, to catch the first train for the South.

Peter was no hustler. He dressed his shop window but twice a year. At Christmas a weird collection of rather weary-looking toys was given the light of day on the top shelf of the window, various delicious comestibles, such as home-made haggis, "parliament" gingerbread cakes, Everton toffee (and I was once greatly astonished to see there six jujube fish of jelly-like consistency, strewn over with powdered sugar), sweetie loaf, etc.

The third shelf was devoted to Bibles, tracts and various other publications of a highly moral nature; while the ground floor, so to speak, of the window held a profusion of bootlaces, and pens, pencils, slates and other educational implements.

The only other occasion in each year when the window was gutted, washed out with soap and hot water and the glass polished like any mirror, was on the occasion of Janet's birthday. Then Peter really did break out, and the shelves were decorated with white heather; one whole shelf was devoted to little white cakes all beautifully iced—the "emblem of purity," said Peter—while a large round cake in the centre bore the inscription "To ma dearie." It lay in state there invariably for a week, when it was solemnly set forth on the round table in the "sittin'" parlour, wherein Peter's and Janet's more intimate friends gathered on the momentous birthday and partook of large chunks of it, washed down with "reel sherry wine." It had four white stucco angels at the corners, and the unmarried girls bidden to the feast had, amid much nudging and giggling, to draw lots for them. To be the proud possessor of one of Janet Tamson's angels was a sure sign that the recipient would be a bride before the year was out, and Peter was almost inclined to think that, by special dispensation of Providence, it very often came true!

Some time back Messrs. Rake and Grabbit had sent their head traveller to try and conquer the adamant Peter. But the gentleman in question came away with "a flea in his lug," begotten of the latter's acid tongue. In revenge, this miserable creature persuaded, for a mild bet, some few of the juniors from another firm to try their luck in Glengollach.

One day in June, while Peter was busily engaged in filing down a ragged tooth which, sharper than that of the proverbial serpent, was causing the Elder many a "dird," Tinny McTavish wheeled the station barrow to the shop door, and taking down one of the boxes piled thereon, dragged it into the shop. He was followed by a dapper gentleman of some twenty-four summers clad in the very latest "note" from town.

Peter, who was filing away in front of a small mirror hung up behind the counter, pretended not to hear their entry, and took no notice.

"Ahem!" crowed the commercial nut.

"Aahem!" said Peter, his mouth full of rusty file.

"Good morning, Mr. Thomson."

"Oh, A didna see ye," said the Elder, with crushing sarcasm. "Tinny, if ye stan' there an' cackle like a hen wife ye'll get a hot lug afore ye're muckle aulder." As he rebuked Tinny, the Elder regarded the bagman with that stony stare which had undone many of the same kin.

"A presoom ye didna bring that muckle box here for the pleeshure o' sayin' (mincingly) 'Good-morning, Mr. Tamson.'"

"Oh no, quite so, certainly not."

"Wud ye explain to me, me bein' dull in the intellec', hoo' quite so, sairtainly not' cud be 'Oh no!' at ane an' the same time?"

"Oh yes; that is, oh no; oh damn; I might as well try to sell goods to the devil."

As the bagman rushed down the village street he heard Peter's stentorian voice behind him.

"A belieeve ye'll sell quicker tae the deil than ye wull tae Peter Tamson, ye wee bit shargour."

Turning to Tinny, he said, severely, "Tak yon crater's bit boixie tae the station, Tinny."

"Imphm," replied Tinny.

The tooth at last filed to a comforting flatness. Peter went into the garden to see how his bedding-out plants were coming on.

The next candidate for Peter's custom was older and more to the manner born. He was a man of maturer age than the last one, and was quietly but neatly dressed. He had no samples, no appearance of the commercial about him save a heavy gold watch-chain and a diamond ring; indeed, to the layman's eye he might be merely a potential customer. He little knew Peter Tamson.

"Good morning, Mr. Thomson."

"A fine mornin'," quoth Peter.

"I understand the soil here is sandy, Mr. Thomson."

"Aye, and dry at that," rather grimly.

"Now, I wonder if you could tell me of the best potato to plant, for my little garden at home has a sandy soil, and I've not been very successful lately."

"Come wi' me an' I'll show ye the grandest growing tattie in the world."

Leading the unsuspecting bagman through the shop to the garden, Peter opened an outhouse door and pointed to a large heap of potatoes. "That's a tattie called The Factor, aa' there's nae better value to be grown."

"Indeed, indeed; most interesting. I'll take a note of the name and order some from——"

"Ye'll get nae better or cheaper than them. I'll do you twa hunderweight at 18s. 6d. a hunder [7s. 6d. was the market price] for cash doon, but ye must mak' up yer mind, for I'm expectin' a traveller body wi' some thingies I want for the shop." (Oh Peter !)

"I'll take a hundredweight and pay now," said the traveller, producing a handful of silver and scenting an order.

Peter pocketed the 18s. 6d. and told Janet to run and tell Tinny McTavish to wheel the potatoes to the station after putting them in a sack.

"An' there'll be thruppence for the bag."

"Ah, Mr. Thomson, I see you're a good business man."

He paid Peter the threepence and proceeded to tell him that he represented Messrs. Soe and Soe, and would show him samples of anything he required.

"Weel, weel," said Peter, "a body's aye learnin' something. I'd never ha'e suspeikit *you* o' being a traveller. A thocht ye waur a gentleman." (Oh, Peter, I doubt Auld Hornie was at your elbow then.)

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the bagman uneasily; "but what can I show you?"

"Oh, I'm needin' some wincey petticoats and red flannel drawers for the wives i' the Glen."

The traveller was off to the station, and returned accompanied by Tinny and the barrow with the usual complement of boxes. Quickly the counter was a sea of petticoats and red flannel drawers. Peter handled them with the air of a perfect connoisseur.

"Now that one you have in your hand is a splendid line. Only ten thousand of them left, dirt cheap at 5s. 6d. apiece, but a considerable reduction by the hundred."

"H'm, A thochtie licht in weight," murmured Peter, "an' terrible skimpit tae the breadth. Ye see the weemen hereaboats are auld fashioned kind, an' they'll no wear ony o' they strumpet narrow petticoats or drawers."

"Oh, but my dear sir," remonstrated Mr. Traveller.

"A'm tellin' ye," said Peter, fixing his steely eye on the man.

"Well, this one is a good line," handing another.

"No very even in the wool, na, na, badly loomed, badly loomed."

"Oh, I assure you——"

"Ye may assure me till yer blin', but ye'll no convince me."

The red flannel drawers shared the same fate, and in less than twenty minutes the traveller was well on his way to the station, minus 3s. 6d. railway fare, 18s. 6d. for potatoes to a back garden which did not exist, 3d. for a sack, and 2s. 6d. to Tinny for his services!

"What'll A do wi' yer tatties?" said Tinny as they reached the station.

"Take yourself to the devil, and the potatoes with you," was the uncompromising reply.

Half an hour later Tinny resold the potatoes to the Elder for half a crown, and proceeded to spend the rest of the day in unholy debauchery at the Glengollach Arms.

For a long time Peter remained unmolested, until one day there came an American, who, entering the shop, handed Peter his card across the counter. It bore this inscription:

"Mr. Dionysius Yark,

"Messrs. Snuffle & Ponk, New York, U.S.A."

Peter pulled himself together, donned his great horn-rimmed spectacles and read the card.

"Traveller?"

"Yep, I reckon so."

"A'm no needin' onything at present."

"Guess you will, sir, when you see the goods."

"A some doot it," grimly.

"It's up to me, anyhow."

"Aye, if yer keen on waste o' breath, but I hear you Yankees need to let aff a lot o' steam for fear o' bustin'."

"Mr. Thomson, you're great," and seizing Peter's hairy paw, exclaimed, jovially, "Guess we'll do a deal—shake."

Peter's attitude was that of the hen who had reared ducklings and passed a pond with them for the first time. His reckoning was out. Here was a new animal in the human menagerie, a complete stranger to Glengollach, the first the Elder had met, and, truth to tell, he did not just know how to tackle him.

This astonishing person was dressed as quietly as a Plymouth brother; no gold cable across the waistcoat, no diamond ring or curled moustache, no anything that one expected.

He was a nice, freshly complexioned man of about thirty-six, in a neat blue serge suit and black tie, no gloves, no button-hole, no "glad eye" for the girls in a shop—just an earnest, convincing manner and no frills.

Many of the travellers tried to patronise Peter, and he never allowed even Lord Peat, his landlord, to do that; but this curious person was neither patronising nor servile; he was just straight.

"The situation's just this, sir," said the man, very quietly. "I'm out to sell my firm's goods. I'm going to tell you about them if you'll give me a few minutes, and if you like them you'll give me a small order; if you don't—well—there are no bones broken; and perhaps another time you will."

"Yer honest, onyway," said Peter, who was already feeling weak about the backbone, and almost saw himself counting out good golden sovereigns from the stocking-foot for things he had no earthly use for. He knew he was lost, and wisely thought that the sooner he got it over the less it would cost, as he might weaken further still.

"I've never met your kind afore," said Peter, a little bead or two of sweat appearing on his sun-tanned brow. The American just looked quietly into his eyes, and Peter faltered, "I'll gie ye a hunderweight o' tatties tae just leave yer boxies at the station an' no come back."

"I reckon that's a battle half won," said Mr. Yark. "But I'll not take the advantage of you, Mr. Thomson. Let me just show you one or two lines, judge the quality for yourself, and then give me an order—or *not*, just as you please."

"Weel, weel," said Peter, "the sooner ower the better."

The American went to the door and whistled to Tinny, who was round the corner ready with the box-laden barrow to "charge" at the given signal.

"Yer gey an' cute," said the Elder, sardonically.

"Maybe, Mr. Thomson, but I'll prove to you I'm honest as well."

The goods were shown, the stocking-foot was poorer by ten golden sovereigns, and all Peter said to himself as Tinny accompanied the Yankee to the station was, "Wha'd ha'e believed A was sic' a dam' saftie."

IN THE GARDEN.

THE PENTSTEMON AS A GARDEN FLOWER.

FROM early July until the frosts of autumn create havoc our gardens owe not a little of their attractiveness to the florists' Pentstemons. It is pleasing to know that the value of these is becoming more fully appreciated each year, mainly on account of the beautiful groups that some nurserymen who specialise in these flowers arrange for our delectation at Holland House and other summer and autumn shows. But, excellent as these are, it is as garden plants that Pentstemons show to the best advantage. The stately vigour of the plants, their freedom of flowering, and the wide range of colours they now embrace, entitle them to a position that is second to that occupied by few other outdoor flowers. Another point in their favour is that they are easily grown and propagated, so that once a good strain is obtained the gardener will experience little difficulty in perpetuating and increasing those varieties that give the greatest pleasure. Of their usefulness for filling large lawn beds or spaces in the mixed border where, perhaps, early bulbs such as Crocuses or Daffodils gave blossom in spring, one cannot speak too highly; but the accompanying illustration, from a photograph taken in the gardens at Claremont, demonstrates that a whole border, planted with Pentstemons, provides as beautiful a picture as one could wish for, and at the same time one that is in several respects unique.

In common with every other plant, the florist's Pentstemon, good natured though it is, well repays generous treatment. It will grow and flower well in comparatively poor soil, but will give longer spikes, larger flowers and, usually, better colours,

with certainly a much extended display, where the ground was deeply dug and thoroughly manured the previous autumn. This, with bountiful supplies of water during the summer months, and, where possible, a mulching during June of short, thoroughly decayed manure, are all the special cultural requirements called for.

Propagation.—This is effected in two ways—by seeds and by cuttings. Seeds may be sown at two seasons, viz., February or early March, and during June or the first week in July. I prefer the latter period, because the plants raised then make good, sturdy specimens for planting out the following spring. Those raised early in the year sometimes flower late in the autumn, but anything like a good display of blossoms is usually out of the question, and should the winter prove very wet and cold, many of them would succumb. For June sowing it is advisable to mix some good loam with a moderate quantity of sand and leaf-soil, passing the whole through a half-inch meshed sieve. Ordinary well drained seed boxes or pans are filled with this and the seeds scattered thinly on the surface, a very thin covering of soil and the usual watering completing the work. A cold frame is excellent for germination and subsequent growth, the seedlings being transplanted 3in. apart into other boxes as soon as they are an inch or two high. In these boxes they may remain for the winter. If more convenient, a bed of rather sandy soil could be made up in a cold frame and the seedlings transplanted from the seed boxes to that, allowing at least 3in. between the plants. By the end of April next year Pentstemons raised in this way would be in just the right condition for planting outdoors.

where they are to flower. During the winter the frame must be freely ventilated whenever the weather is sufficiently kind to allow it, and about the end of February the top of each plant may be pinched out, this inducing a branching and consequently freely flowered specimen.

Cuttings.—Although seedlings, if raised from seed procured from a good source, will generally give flowers of excellent quality, there is almost certain to be a few of inferior character. For this reason gardeners prefer cuttings, as these naturally perpetuate exactly the traits of the plant or plants from which they are taken. Rooting Pentstemon cuttings is a very simple gardening operation, but one that is by no means devoid of interest. About mid-August is the season to commence; at that time the plants will have near their bases a number of young, non-flowering shoots, and these are the ones to select, choosing those about 3in. in length. After cutting each close beneath a joint and trimming off the lower leaves, they may be planted 3in. apart in a bed of sandy soil in a cold frame. Well watered and shaded from bright sunshine they quickly make roots, and from that time onwards need the same treatment as advised for seedlings, planting them outdoors the following April. The raising of plants annually from cuttings or seeds is important because, although the florist's Pentstemon is hardy, the plant often

WORK AMONG THE ROSES.

ALTHOUGH the earliest Roses, such as the old Gloire de Dijon, common Pink Monthly and the hybrid Rugosa Conrad F. Meyer, are already in bloom the majority of the dwarf and standard varieties are only in the bud stage. Under certain conditions it is advisable to thin the buds now, though I must confess that I prefer to let them grow as they please. Where, however, extra good blooms on long, clear stems are required thinning or disbudding has its advantages. Some varieties, such as Lady Alice Stanley and Richmond, frequently produce only one bud on a stem, while others, such as Miss Cynthia Forde, have clusters of from three to five or even more. It is these latter that need attention at the present time. A good rule to follow is to leave the central or uppermost bud and remove the others with sharp scissors, but if this bud is in any way deformed the most promising of the side ones ought to be left. The thinning of growths, particularly on bush Roses, ought also to receive attention now. One frequently finds that a vigorous plant makes a dense mass of young shoots, and these, as well as the flowers, will derive benefit from judicious thinning. Weak liquid manure or a dressing of some quick-acting fertiliser, applied now and well watered in, will assist Roses very considerably, and make all the



H. N. King.

A BORDER OF PENTSTEMONS IN THE GARDENS AT CLAREMONT.

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succumbs to the excessive wet that characterises our winters. If old plants are retained their tops should be left intact all the winter, and then cut off the following March.

Types of Florists' Pentstemons.—There are two distinct types, one with flower spikes 3f. high and blossoms of large size; and the other of more dwarf and branching habit, and smaller though more graceful flowers. Both have their place in the garden, though for general bedding effects the latter, of which the well known Newbury Gem is a good example, is the most useful. This Pentstemon has glowing crimson-scarlet flowers, which are produced in abundance over a very long season, and forms the dark belt seen just behind the edging of dwarf white Alyssum in the illustration. Others of this dwarf, branching type are White and Pink Newbury Gem, and Hewell Pink Bedder, with salmon-pink blossoms borne on rather longer stems. These dwarf Pentstemons suffer less from wet weather during the winter than those of the taller and larger type, and are also more useful for cutting, the flowers lasting longer in water and presenting a more graceful appearance. Of the large-flowered set there is now such a host of named varieties that it is almost useless to give a list. They can be seen at any summer or autumn show, and, unlike many flowers, may be safely ordered from these, as, up to the present, they have been exhibited in a natural condition.

F. W. H.

difference between large flowers of good form and substance and weak stemmed, badly shaped blossoms. If the appearance is not objected to, a 2in. thick mulching of thoroughly decayed manure over the surface of the beds will prove of the greatest assistance to Roses, especially where they are growing in soil that is of a porous character. Even after a prolonged spell of hot, dry weather, the soil under the mulching will be comparatively cool and quite moist, but the manure must be short and well decomposed, so that it has almost the appearance of leaf-soil and is perfectly free from objectionable smell.

At this season aphides are undoubtedly the worst pest the rosarian has to contend with, though happily it is one that with a little persistence, is not difficult to eliminate. For those who have plenty of time, a special aphid brush, sold by most seedsmen and horticultural sundriesmen, will be found useful. This is carefully drawn up the affected shoots and then dipped in weak insecticide or very hot water. It is surprising what a lot of insects can be exterminated by this useful little tool, and without fear of injury to the Rose buds. Where bushes have to be treated wholesale we must, however, rely on one of the specially prepared insecticides, all of which are effective against aphides. Care must, however, be taken to observe the directions supplied with them, and, if anything, mix a little weaker than the respective vendors state.

H.

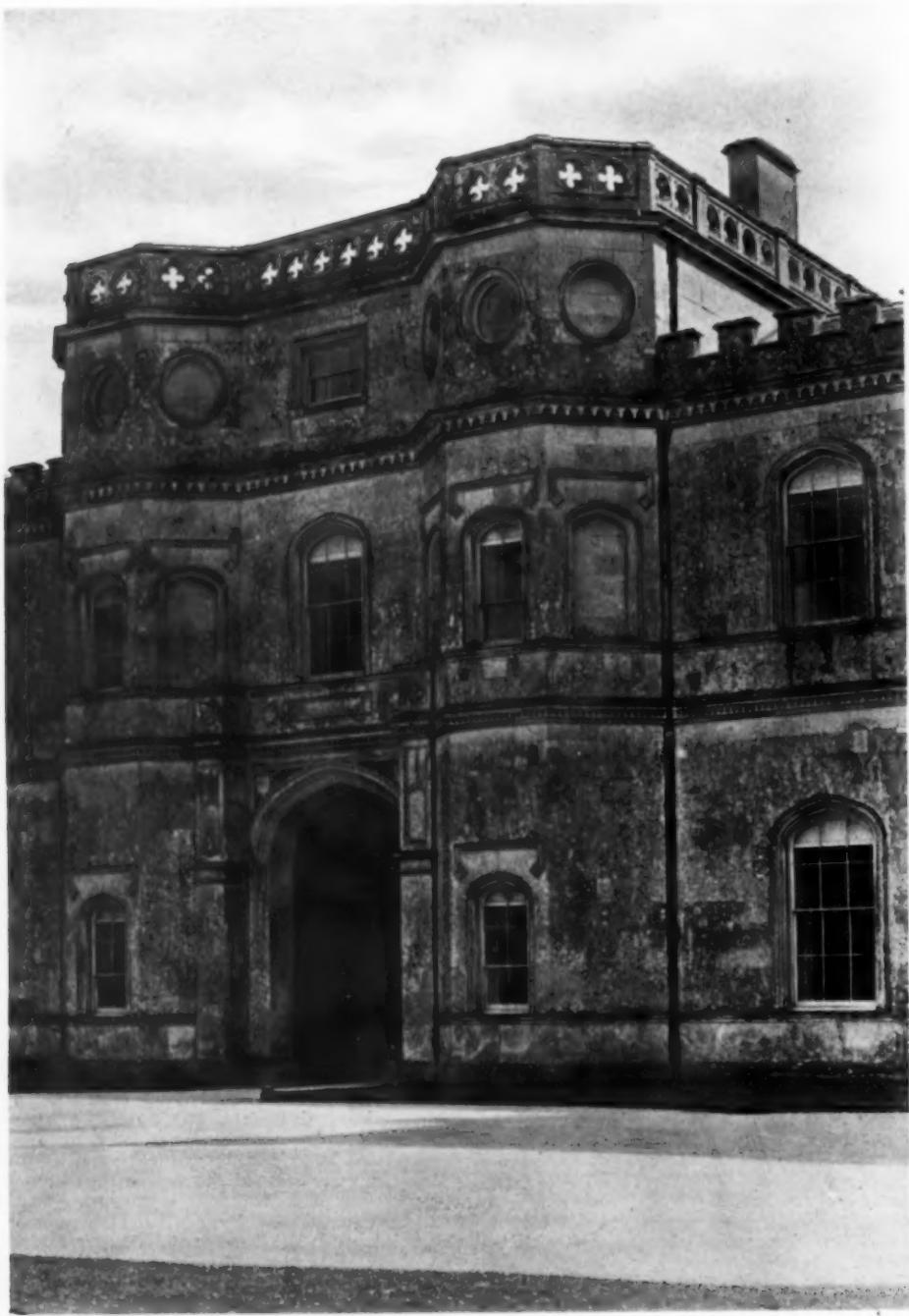


OF the monastic buildings at Milton Abbas nothing remains except the Great Hall. It is doubtful whether what was removed would have been worth preserving. Descriptions and Buck's view might enable a studious person to reconstruct much of what has vanished, but it would scarcely repay the trouble. Buck's view, at any rate, conveys the impression

that all the buildings except the hall and church were rather mean in quality and size. We read of one or more courtyards with low ranges of buildings—one in front with small narrow windows; while further away was a very fine barn, and that is all. Such as they were they were not destroyed till long after the Dissolution. There were pullings down, patchings, and rebuildings in 1730, 1737, 1751 and

1753. Probably Lord Dorchester was well advised when in 1771 he decided to make a clean sweep of all the domestic part of the structure, except the Great Hall, and to erect on the site a modern house of suitable size and dignity. It is the house then built that still exists practically unaltered.

The work was entrusted to Sir William Chambers and he was instructed, or himself decided, so to design the new building as to harmonise with the Gothic hall it had to include and the great church which must be its somewhat overpowering neighbour. A quadrangle was accordingly erected with a great gateway in the middle of one side and the hall filling the side opposite, so that the hall porch was seen through the entrance arch. In all essentials the hall building was unaltered and remains as it was erected in 1498 for Abbot Middleton, that date being inscribed both on the interior stonework and on the carved wooden screen. The monogram and canting arms of the Abbot appear in the spandrels of the portal—a Mill over a "ton," or barrel, his name, Middleton, having been pronounced Milton, as also was in fact the case with the name of the Abbey itself, which was originally Middleton. Three other shields are in the frieze above the arch; in the centre England quartering France, to the left the arms attributed to Athelstan the founder, to the right those of the Abbey—sable, three baskets replenished with three loaves of bread or. These arms, by the bye, also appear on the seal of the Abbey, which likewise depicts either the intended or the once existing façade of the church, showing three spires, one over a portal at the end of each aisle.



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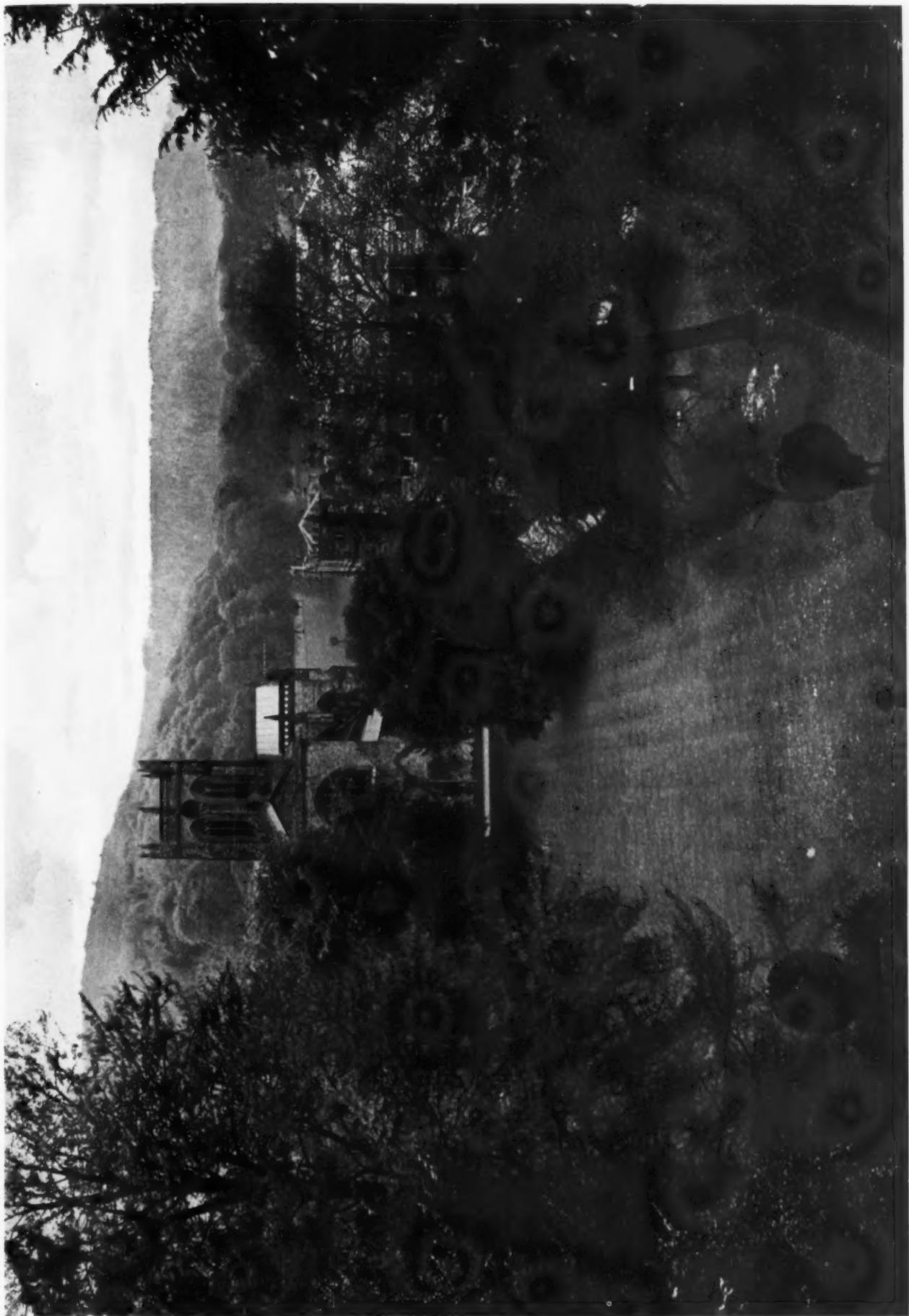
WEST ENTRANCE TO COURTYARD.

COUNTRY LIFE."

"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE ABBEY FROM THE GRASS STAIRWAY.

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The Great Hall is a stately chamber, 26½ ft. by 53½ ft., with notable, richly moulded, open timber roof, supported on sculptured corbels which rest on engaged moulded shafts, each carried by a sculptured angel holding a shield. Below these angels and the mullioned windows (each of two tiers of three lights) runs a moulded stone string-course, enriched with numerous shields and other heraldic devices. These are for the most part in good original condition, but have not been entirely untampered with, as some of the arms represent post-Dissolution worthies. The colouring has also been refreshed. The sculptured angels and string-course form a beautiful decorative feature on which we cannot afford space to dwell at greater length. Perhaps the most

while at the foot of it is an interesting sculptured Roman marble sarcophagus of about the fourth century. A relatively modern fireplace is the only new architectural feature in the hall itself, but the oriel has been altered into a lobby. The great Tudor tables with a dozen bulbous legs which appear in an old print are unfortunately gone, but a good deal of fine furniture replaces them, notable among which is a splendidly carved Italian cassone. Several important tapestries hang on the walls; more suitable decoration or a more suitable place for the display of such treasures could not be devised. It is terrible to think of the inharmonious surroundings into which the bulk of the precious tapestry of Europe has been moved in recent years, owing to the transfer of the weight of wealth by changed modern conditions.

A few fine trophies of horns are fastened higher up on the walls; one is an elk's head found with several others in an Irish bog on Damer property in the year 1732. It was, therefore, probably placed here by Lord Dorchester. A large ibex head is also noticeable, and rather a good markhor. Under a great buffalo head in the centre of the dais end are the arms of Archbishop Morton, and near them those of the contemporary Bishop of Salisbury.

Coming now to the work of Sir William Chambers, the most striking and, indeed, a very remarkable feature for its date is the main entrance façade. The form of its central mass is obviously borrowed from a mediæval gatehouse, and the crowning parapet is quite openly copied from the neighbouring church, with happy effect. The four-centred entrance arch, with its sculptured spandrels, the battlements, the labels above the first-floor windows, the forms of the window heads and the mouldings of the jambs are all of Gothic derivation, intended to bring the house into harmony with the church. The architect perhaps thought he was designing in a truly Gothic style, yet the whole is, and looks, substantially and efficiently Georgian; while the moment the threshold is crossed every trace of Gothic is left outside.

The hybrid exterior is decidedly interesting, and possesses much positive merit, which a hide-bound spectator might easily fail to perceive. The style of the whole was invented *ad hoc*, for a great house to be planted beside an imposing Gothic church, and it must be judged in relation to all the factors of the architect's problem. No one can deny the dignity of the entrance gateway or the evident and successful endeavour to provide by means of it an effective frame for the first view of the mediæval hall. A difficult problem is, in fact, here satisfactorily solved. Had the design been more correctly Gothic, the gateway would have been a foolish feature in a Georgian house. As it is, the effect produced is good, and

when that is accomplished it matters not by what violation of rules the result is arrived at.

The house contains many spacious rooms, staircases, corridors and so forth, of which only brief mention can be made. There is no trace of mediævalism here. A pure eighteenth century style reigns in proportions and decorative details. The saloon and all the rooms on that side of the house are said to have been decorated by Adam; but in fact the new interiors of the dining-room and saloon were designed by James Wyatt for General Conway. This statement is made on the authority of a "Life of Mrs. Damer," to which I have not been able to refer. The ceiling of the saloon is in the form of a barrel vault, delicately



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MIDDLETON'S REBUS.

remarkable, though not the most beautiful, feature in the hall is the elaborately carved screen, which is in substantially original condition authenticated by a genuine date. At a first glance it would be easy to mistake this work for "churchwarden Gothic," so unusual is its aspect. It is, in fact, the last effort of mediæval Gothic design in carpentry, almost on the verge of the Renaissance, and it was this kind of thing that was reacted against by those who brought over the new and, at first, simple and lucid classical forms from the Continent.

The shelf of the screen is now decorated by a remarkable, evidently ancient bronze horn (about which nothing is known), a couple of good helmets, a target, and a black-jack,

"COUNTRY LIFE."

adorned with stucco work, the frieze around the top of the walls being an attractive feature, as our illustration last week showed. The walls of this fine chamber are hung with a set of Flemish tapestries, dating from about the year 1500. They are in excellent condition, and represent such subjects in sacred history as were capable of being treated, after the fashion of the day, as stately pageants—the meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, for instance, where the artist, totally unconcerned with the religious significance

recovered, as they must have been, for the most part at least, members of the Damer family. None of these pictures is of any conspicuous individual merit, but together they produce the effect of aristocratic importance which was intended. The chimneypiece is an excellent example of its style, carried out with delicate refinement of detail. These and other rooms contain much good furniture of the same date as the house and later, left behind by Lord Portarlington when he sold it. Our illustrations show such examples as



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WEST END OF HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

of the event portrayed, was able to use it for the display of rich costumes and elaborate accessories. The borders of flower and fruit garlands are of special sumptuousness in this priceless series, in which the prevailing colours are red and blue. The dining-room is no less imposing in size and stately proportions. The wall panelling is designed to frame eight full-length portraits of men in court costumes, whose names are not remembered, but could doubtless be easily

happened to come into view, but there is plenty more of similar quality. Attention may be called to the unusually decorative and tasteful billiard-table, a piece of furniture which is seldom anything but an eyesore. Nothing is known of its history beyond the fact that no one remembers a time when it was not in its present position. It is, at all events, not less than three-quarters of a century old. The heavy iron contrivance on the floor beneath it is a man-trap. It

was found in a wood at Bere Regis, and is a terrible-looking instrument of torture, which might well break an unlucky poacher's leg. Two pictures hanging in the serving-room are worth attention. They are the wings of an altarpiece which belonged to an abbey, and bear the name of "Sir John Weston, Prior," but I could not read the name of the abbey. They depict the



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IN THE BILLIARD-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Trinity, the Virgin going up the Temple steps, the Presentation, and St. John Baptist. They are, no doubt, English pictures painted in the style borrowed from the Flemings about the end of the fifteenth century. English pictures of that period have been little studied. If they are good they are called Flemish. If they are bad they are naturally neglected. Here is a subject that some lover of old things would find profit and interest in looking up. He would have the field all to himself.

M. C.

THE RETURNS FROM CHEESE.

BILLINGSLEY, in his "Survey of Somerset" (1795), refers to "the present enormous price of near sixpence per pound twelve months old" of cheese. It would be interesting to record this worthy gentleman's impressions could he revisit the scenes of his former labours at the present time,

they have tended to be, on the whole, distinctly higher than in the years immediately preceding. Even so, the highest quotation for April cheese last year was about 63s. per hundredweight.

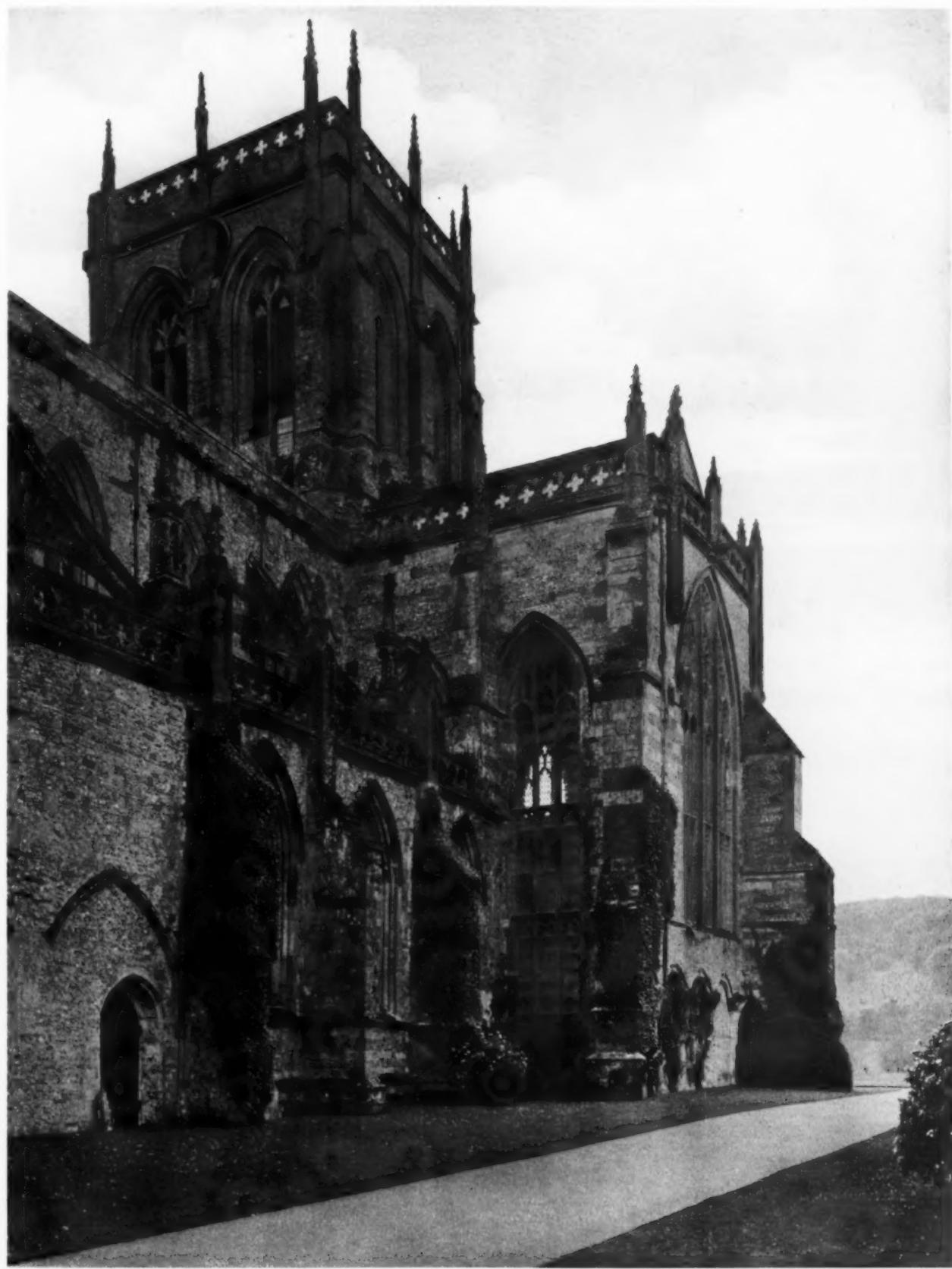
During the last two or three months the price of Cheddar cheese (and it may be taken as fairly representing the trend of prices of other varieties) has been about £5 per hundredweight—rather over than under. At the weekly auction at Highbridge old Cheddars recently realised 114s. per hundredweight—surely a record for the Cheddar or any other variety except, perhaps, Stiltons. New cheese not more than four or five weeks old is worth 95s. to 100s. per hundredweight, and much that is very immature is being rushed on to the market. Containing, as it does, a large percentage of moisture, such cheese yields little, if anything, short of 1lb. per gallon of milk, and shows return of 10d. to 11d. per gallon. Compared with a wholesale price for milk of 7d. to 8d. per gallon, the cheese maker is reaping a handsome profit for the trouble and expense of making up his produce.



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THE DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE ABBEY CHURCH: NORTH SIDE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The cheese maker looks for an appreciable addition to his returns from the pigs which, with the aid of purchased meals, are fattened on the whey from the dairy. The usual convention is to set the amount thus realised against the cost of making the cheese. In some seasons this figure is undoubtedly exceeded, the main controlling factors being the cost price of feeding stuffs and the selling price of bacon. At the present time strong pigs ready to go into the fattening sties are very dear and may cost anything from 7s. to 8s. per head. Feeding meals of all descriptions are also excessively dear. On the other hand, bacon pigs are worth 1s. 6d. per score. Assuming a purchase price of 7s. and the consumption per head of two sacks of meal

at 1s. per sack, the cost of fattening would work out at £5 15s. per head.

Pigs of an average dead weight of ten score would realise, at 1s. 6d. per score, £7 5s. per head, leaving a margin of £1 10s. for profit and incidental charges. Allowing for variations in prices and returns, a profit of about 1s. per head may be looked for, the figure which successful dairymen calculate on realising, and this in spite of the high price of store pigs and of feeding stuffs. As regards cheese, makers are, beyond a doubt, in for a prosperous time; and though the returns from pig fattening are more uncertain, there would appear to be a reasonable prospect of, at least, average profits. CHEDDAR VALLEY.

MY FIRST ENGLISH SPRING.

BY AN AUSTRALIAN VISITOR.

I AM in the midst of my first English spring. All my life, in a far-off British possession, I have read of its glories and dreamed of its greenness. And now, at last I am seeing for myself the joys and beauties of which I have dreamed so long. At first I was disappointed. It came so slowly. It seemed as if the winter would never end. I had read so often "The hounds of spring are on winter's traces," and I had pictured the coming of spring as something dramatic. I thought there would be a more sudden awakening, that all the trees would burst out together. It is not in the least dramatic. The trees take no heed of the general effect, but come creeping out as they like; and while the horse chestnuts were in full leaf and ready to burst into blossom, the elms were only peeping to see if winter had gone, while the lazy planes had not even stirred in their sleep. But I have long since lost my disappointment in sheer wonder at their beauty.

And I know of nothing as adorable as the coming of the new leaves. There were the big, light buds of the horse chestnuts, that looked so full of promise against the dark branches; there were the catkins of the willows, the little red flowers of the elms and the red spikes of the black poplars. There were the funny long, slim buds of the

beech, which gave no hint of the exquisite green leaves folded inside; and most lovely of all to me, there was the green rain of the larch buds before they burst forth into their shower of beauty. In Devonshire, in early April, I walked through a larch wood coming into full leaf. In the hedge grew pale primroses. Behind, a tall pine forest made a dark background for the exquisite green, and the scent of sea and pines was sweet on the sunny air. In the years to come, when I am back in the land of the ever green trees, the memory of that April day, the gleaming primroses, the dark pines and the lovely larches will stay with me always.

I have lost my heart to your English trees, and each day as fresh leaves unfold I am deeper and deeper in their toils. I have known many beautiful trees. I have loved the gleaming tips of the red gums in spring, the apple green of the young turpentines, the shining new leaves of the lilli-pillis and the coachwood, and I still think there is no more magnificent and majestic tree than a tall blue gum. But while I am faithful to the beauties of my own land, I have succumbed to the fascination of these ever-unfolding sweetneses. I cannot resist the charm of the silver birch when she raises herself on her mottled stem and waves to me with slim green arms. And who, with eyes to see, could



M. C. Cottam.

A SONG OF ENGLISH TREES.

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W. A. J. Hensler.

PINE AND GORSE.

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resist the beauties of the sycamore with its hanging grape-like flowers, or the tenderness of the lime leaves as they uncurl from their sheaths? I walked to-day along an avenue of limes. The gay green was dazzling against the dark boughs, and below, brought down by last night's shower, lay the pink sheaths, still bright and glowing, but no longer needed by the trees. If I were a poet I would write a song of English trees, a song of limes and larches, beeches and birches, elms and sycamores, and of poplars and willows. What a sweet, green song it would be! Not all green either, for I should sing of the horse chestnuts too, with their gleaming white flower candles, and of the purple lilac and the laburnum's dropping gold. But I am not a poet, and I can only worship in my humble way.

The garden where I sit and write is perfumed with lilacs—purple, mauve and white—and the laburnum is just gleaming through its green covers. "Laylocks and laburninghams" Sally calls them, and somehow they have gained a new charm by these quaint names. And I wonder if you who have lived in England all your lives can know what a joy the quaint country names are to me. I have been delighted by a small white flower which grows on the top of a tall, straight stem. It looks like a fairy army on parade as it stands in masses in the hedges and the ditches. A botanist told me it was "garlic mustard," and I was sadly disappointed. Then I heard it called "Jack-by-the-hedge," and knew it rightly named. I have watched with interest the "lords and ladies," wondering if they would "come out" before their proper season, for they sent their leaves months ago. The "lady-smocks of silver white" and "shepherd's purse" and "ragged robin" all have a charm which lies almost more in their names than in the flowers themselves. Indeed, there is an added joy in all the flowers with simple, familiar names, for they are the flowers I have learned to love through the pages of my poets. "The daffodils that come before the swallow dares" mean Herrick and Wordsworth to me as well as their own loveliness. The primrose, "the first born child of eve," is not just a yellow primrose in my eyes, it is the "soft silken" flower of Milton and Shakespeare.

I picked my first bunch of wild primroses on a Devon hillside by the sea. Larks were singing overhead, lambs bleating in the meadows shoreward, and out at sea a hundred red-brown sails lazed across the still, pale water. At my

feet was an old, old fort, which had guarded the river's mouth in the days of the Plantagenets; and across the bay the good red earth of Devon smiled at me, the comer from the newest of lands, just as it smiled in the springtime of the bygone centuries. But the picking of the primroses spanned the years, and I felt like a child who has come home.

I gathered my first bunch of "cowslips wan that hang the pensive head" at Fleam Dyke, the old earthwork that runs across the white chalk land of Cambridgeshire, the old stronghold where the Iceni defied the Romans. The sides of the great earth mound were yellow with the flowers, thrushes were building in the budding hawthorns, and all was so friendly and peaceful that it seemed the most natural thing in the world that I, an Australian, should be picking cowslips on the fortification where Romans and Iceni fought in Ancient Britain.

I cannot tell you how I love the daisies, which just now are powdering England's face. They give me an indescribable feeling of simple delight; they make me smile and want to sing. As I walk through "meadows trim with daisies pied," scraps from the poets come to my lips, little glad bits from here and there,

Strowe me the ground with Daffa-down-dillies
And Cowslips and Kingups and lovéd Lillies,
or
Wings from the wind to please her mind
Notes from the lark I'll borrow.

Or a dozen other scraps just as inconsequential, but just as glad, and fit for singing in a daisied field. I love to pluck big handfuls of the sweet, frilly things and carry them home to sweeten my room. People laugh at me—almost sneer—and say they are children's flowers, weeds, rubbish. But I agree with Chaucer:

Of all the floures in the mede
Than love I most these floures white and rede
Soch that men callen daisies in our toun.

Flowers and birds and poets are so mixed together in my mind that this first northern spring has been to me like opening a lovely illustrated edition of all the poets. The birds—must I say it? I am disappointed in the birds. Perhaps I expected too much. But you know it has been written of Australia:

A land where bright blossoms are scentless
And songless bright birds.

And I, who have known the stupidity and untruth of that couplet, have always wondered what songs the English birds could have, to make a poet's ears so deaf to the songs of the Southland. I came eager to hear the thrush, the blackbird, the nightingale and the lark—eager to hear and ready to admire. I have heard "the wise thrush" as he

Sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture.

It is beautiful, but no more beautiful, no richer and fuller, than my own grey Australian thrush, though I admit the

And, above all, the voice of Keats in the immortal ode—

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!

And is it Shelley or the skylark himself that fills me with such delight as I walk across the sunlit meadows? I hardly know. To me the skylark means Shelley. And yet I think that even if he had never caught the bird's "harmonious madness" I must have lost my heart to that sweet singer at "heaven's gate." To me the lark is above criticism; he is the embodiment of joy, and his song fills me with sheer delight as he wings higher still and higher, while his gush of music comes floating earthward.

I have heard the cuckoo too, and I must confess that to me he is more like the mechanical clock than a wandering voice. No doubt I was unfortunate in having heard the clock first. I was filled with excitement when I first heard his voice, but I fear it was more from association than for its music.

And I have heard the blackbird, though he seems to sing so seldom, and the robin, and the chaffinch, which Burroughs says is the sweetest singer of all the small English birds. I think I have heard all the birds which have sung to me all my life through the pages of the poets, but I have not heard one song to surpass the song of the magpies in Australia warbling in the paddocks on a fresh autumn morning. I have not heard one song to surpass the song of the butcher bird gurgling among the gum trees in late summer after the cares of nesting are over. I have not heard one bird voice that would not fade into insignificance before the round ringing notes of the lyre bird—most wonderful of all bird mimics—as he fills the mountain gullies with his flood of melody.

while the thunder-bird with his clear bright voice, the reed-warbler which sings all night in the reeds by the creek, the native canary which warbles among the gum saplings, and the Jacky Winter which sings a brave song of hope from the tallest tree top, can all hold their own in open competition with the birds which the poets have made famous throughout the world.

Not that I love the English birds less, not that I love my own birds more; but I think that injustice has been done to both, by over-praise as much as by too little. And yet how can I say that of the birds that have given us the "Ode to a Nightingale" and "The Skylark." I do not mean it. I love the English birds for the inspiration they have been



W. Reid.

THE SEASON OF PRIMÉROSES.

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brown bird's song is more sustained and has more of the poet's "fine careless rapture."

I think he must be deaf indeed who finds "no music in the nightingale," but all the while the bird sings it is the voice of the poets that I hear:

Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well,
O Philomel fair, O take some gladness,
Everything did banish moan
Save the nightingale alone;
She poor bird as all forlorn
Lean'd her breast up-till a thorn,
And there sang the dolefull'st ditty.

and for their own sweet sakes too. But I hope some day a Keats or a Shelley may arise to tell the world of the bird melodies of the South.

I must not begin to think about the Springtime in the South. It is all so different, so very different. And yet all through this, my first English Spring, there has been a sense of familiarity, of friendliness. Perhaps it is the echo of the poems I have read; I think it is the blood of my British

ancestors stirring in my veins, but all the time Rossetti's words keep drifting through my mind:

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell;
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet, keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

AMY E. MACK.

THE LAND IN WAR TIME.—IV.

NATIONAL SERVICE FOR WOMEN.

BY C. A. DAWSON SCOTT.

IN a letter just received from the front an officer comments after this fashion on the men who stay at home because they "cannot be spared": "People must wake up to the fact that we are fighting for our existence, as we never did before in history. If we don't come out top, there will not be left for us any of the shops, businesses, practices which men are staying at home to run. Nothing seems to me to matter now, except the winning of this war, and every man is one man more." Of the English it is happily characteristic that difficulty spurs them to effort, and such remarks as the above not only affect the men but the women. When war was declared the duty of the former lay plain. They had, as usual, the simpler part to play. With their brains and bodies they had to make good, and to do it at once. They were immediately occupied with a business of paramount importance.

The case of the women was different; their duty beyond nursing and sewing was somewhat obscure. Only as it became evident that the war would not be over in a few weeks did the new conditions present them with real and vital occupation. These new conditions came about gradually. For instance, at the commencement of the war a little business—a thriving house decorator—lost its best workman. Others followed, and finally the shutters were put up and the decorator himself joined a motor-cycle corps and cycled away. The first thought of those who had employed him was the helpless "How shall I be able to get the stairs painted next spring?" but this changed as the weeks went by into "Well, I suppose I could paint them myself." The hyper-civilised woman had begun to realise that she could, if it were necessary, work.

A month or two passed, and then the bank manager, being in need of an extra clerk, found that his daughter was willing to undertake the work "till the end of the war." "Personally," he said, "I don't think the work of women in banks will come to an end with the war. I believe they have come to stay." In the first case the woman had looked on while a business had been given up because there was no one to carry it on during the man's absence; but in the second, she had awakened to the fact that more than charity, more than knitting was required of her. From a state of yeasty excitement she had developed a growing self-dependence which was anxious to express itself in active usefulness.

Last September an appeal was made by the Women's Defence Relief Corps to women to prepare themselves during the quiet months of the winter for national service. "Helpers joining for civilian work will undertake, when opportunity arises, the labours at present performed by men, and thus release them for enlistment. It is the duty of the Government to support the dependents of those at the front. Therefore the salaries of the men must be used to support the women who have taken over their job; but these jobs will be given up to the men immediately on their return from the war, and an undertaking to do so will be given."

Many women joined this organisation, and began to prepare themselves to take over work which must in time be left owing to the constant drain on the men. Some learned the topography of their neighbourhoods so that they might serve as postmen, milkmen, messengers, etc.; others went to omnibus and railway companies, offering to become conductors or sell tickets; and the organiser asked the Board of Trade in what way women labour outside the spheres in which they already worked was likely to be required.

That was last autumn, when there were still plenty of men in the country, men, too, who were disposed to regard the introduction of women into fresh trades and occupations as an infringement of their rights. Now the tide is beginning to turn. The women are needed; the blanks

left by the withdrawal of the men must be filled or the work cannot go on. The Government, perceiving this, and anxious to know what reserve of labour it had to call upon, issued last March a paper asking for volunteers—"War Service for Women." The reply was disappointing. We were told that 13,000 more unskilled workers were required for munition making, and that it was not difficult work, but some thousands short of that number volunteered.

Why was this? The reasons that suggest themselves are probably only a few out of many. In the first place women who work have already a job, such jobs being in most cases altered and increased by the war. They therefore could not give their days, but only their evenings, holidays and overtime. Another class, that of the lady-woman, has not much strength. Not having been trained to work she does not know how to set about it, and to expect her to become really useful is like expecting a hothouse plant to thrive on Snowdon. She fancies ten cookery lessons will fit her to cook for soldiers and hospitals, that a course of ambulance will turn her into a nurse, and she it is who is responsible for the badly done work of which so much is heard. These two large classes of women, therefore, cannot give much help (although in the case of the former it is probable that many of their present occupations may have to give place to others which are more vitally necessary). A third class remains, women who have worked, women who have been trained for some occupation which has already lapsed, and women who are now training. The reply of this class to the Government request for volunteers was hesitating because it did not believe anything further would be done, and up till now its fears have been justified. Volunteers for munition work who sent up their names in March are still waiting to be used. On the other hand the need grows, and women when permitted are quietly stepping into the vacant places of station-masters, town-criers, tram-conductors, lift-men, waiters on restaurant-cars and in hotels, etc.

The first need of a nation, however, is food; its nearest concern to see that the supplies are grown and gathered. This year the farmers are afraid there will be a shortage of harvesters. In many cases the grass has been "fed off," but a proportion of course remains to be made into hay. An extra quantity of corn is needed to replace supplies usually coming from abroad, and this the farmer is endeavouring to provide. But he is very doubtful as to how he will manage to reap and carry and thresh it. Here then is the Englishwoman's opportunity. Whatever her other labours, this is primal—a more important work, perhaps, even than munition making.

Field work is hard work; it is work at which the villager, the country-woman has helped in her youth. Of all women, she alone has the physical strength which, in some sort, can do the work of the men who have been recruited from the country districts. Her difficulty is that she has generally the burden of a young family. To obviate this difficulty, the natural leaders in each village, the women of character, should awake to the needs of the situation and combine to see that the farmers are supplied with the necessary labour and that the harvesters' children are fed and cared for, and a meal prepared when the women return weary from the fields at night. To do this successfully some trouble must be taken. A committee should be formed, the older villagers given their task of looking after the children and cooking food, and a bargain with regard to the remuneration driven with the farmers. This money should be pooled so that those who do the homework should receive a share. *Small centres of this sort should be formed as soon as possible in every village and country town throughout the country.*

In France women have long taken a larger share in the everyday work of the community than is the English custom.

Who saved the vintage of 1914? The women! Who are responsible for the lavish supply of vegetables to the great markets in Paris? The women! Without any talk or fuss, without even organisation, the French women have undertaken the necessary work. They may not do it as well as the men, but they will do it as well as they can. The crops they sow and harvest may not be as heavy, but they will supply the nation with bread.

What is woman's work when her country is at war? It is for each to take her place in some industry, on the land or in the towns, and quietly, laboriously, conscientiously keep up the supply of necessities, thus feeding the army and preserving from hardship the little children. I should be pleased to consult with and advise anyone anxious to start forming these democratic, decentralized committees for employing the country women on national service.

THE MARAUDING CAT.

BY WALTER RAYMOND.

THE villager's cat that lies basking at noonday on the wall of the cottage garden when the lilac is passing out of flower and the laburnum is covered with "golden chains" is a picture of lazy contentment. Often she blinks, sometimes she yawns, and presently performs a leisurely but partial ablution. She

assurance of a life of full security, poor Pussy cannot stay at home. The call of the hedgerow and the wood is too strong for her. She must seek a larger life beyond the garden plot. Little by little she yields to an invincible passion for adventurous roamings, always wandering further and further afield; until some day, and the time is rarely long, she is not to be seen on the garden wall and does not come for her drop of milk at the hour when the fragrance of bacon and fried potato overcomes the scent even of the stocks with the dew still upon them, that were grown for the good of the bees. She is no more heard of than the ship that founders in mid-ocean. None but the keeper could tell how many cats come to an untimely end; and the keeper, even when strictly truthful, is often a thoughtful, reticent man.

To begin with, it is generally the fault of young rabbits. They are bred in the sandy bank under the old hedge of the orchard at the back of the house. Some of the rats that come up to feed in the pig-sty, also have runs among the plashing and the roots of the ash and the maple, the hazel and the blackthorn. It may be that nefarious enterprises



A LESSER WOODPECKER WITH FOOD FOR ITS YOUNG.

licks herself, washes her forehead and ears with her paw, stretches and lies down again to sleep. Nothing, it appears, could be more enviable than her lot. Her domestic life also must be considered happy. She is admired, petted, even beloved. A saucer of milk is bestowed on her twice a day, and all that is asked of her is to keep her fur bright and sleek, to be as amiable as possible, to catch an occasional mouse and frighten away the rest by her presence. She is free of the hearth and a great deal too free of the garden. Even the moonlit serenade of her romantic but melancholy lover is condoned when in the morning she comes to rub her arched back against the skirt of the pourer of the milk. Then it is "Poor Pussy! poor Pussy!" whatever may have been said in the night. But with all these advantages and full



Smith Whiting.

AN ENEMY AT THE GATE.

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have their beginnings in legitimate business. She begins life a young and inexperienced cat; and spring is so alluring and full of incident. Quite early young blackbirds half flit, half tumble into the ditch from the nest covered with rough grasses, that lies concealed between the saplings and the bank. Then there are fledgling thrushes from a moss-upholstered cradle in the very thick of the thorn bush, that take short, enticing flights from bough to bough until at last they venture too boldly, tire and drop among the briars. Nothing comes amiss. From mere wantonness "poor Pussy" drags out the robin's brood the day after it is hatched and catches the young tits one by one when they begin to adventure from their hole in the apple tree. But all these various diversions lead her on to the corner riddled with holes and caverns, where the bank is bare of herbage and

doubt a young partridge occasionally comes her way and the chick of a wild pheasant sometimes falls to her lot; but should she wander anywhere near the crops her fate is quickly sealed. To see her wandering off of a summer afternoon one could scarcely suspect her of having any destination whatever—she goes so slowly and listens so often, generally keeping alongside the hedgerows and stopping often as if to pry and sniff. But all in her own time she will get to the wood, unless she is stopped on her way. Sometimes slowly crossing a ride she may meet with sudden death. But very often when seen she is out of shot. Then the keeper's dog gives chase. Poor pussy goes up a tree. Poor pussy comes down again.

How thoroughly the cat investigates the proceedings of other living things that inhabit within the limits of her roamings may be guessed from the accompanying photograph of a cat paying a polite call at the nesting hole of a lesser spotted woodpecker. This might be supposed to be merely an accidental attention; but during the period while the woodpecker was under observation other cats visited the scene. The old stump is only a short distance from a large farmhouse, and all the domestic and barn cats, four in number, had knowledge of the nest and made investigations. They tried in vain to get at the young birds. There is, in fact no nest in the ordinary sense, but the woodpecker lays her eggs on the dead wood in the hollow of the tree and at too great a depth to be reached by the paw of a cat. There is no necessity to line the cavity for the sake of warmth, and when the old bird is within, merely from her body heat the place becomes as warm as an oven after the cakes are gone. Any man old enough to have been a schoolboy in the days of egg collecting will remember this, and also the furious strokes of her powerful beak if, after enlarging the hole, he ventured to put a hand within reach. There were no unhappy incidents in this instance, and the brood was quite secure. All four cats seem to have recognised this and to have abandoned a hopeless enterprise. Finally the young birds came out and got away unmolested. All the woodpeckers are charming birds. In this country there are three varieties. The green is common, but the greater and lesser spotted are none too plentiful, although there are many more than we see. The sound of their tapping is one of the charms of the wood; and they have a way of rattling their bills in some crack in a branch with great rapidity and thus making a noise of incredible loudness when the cause is considered. It has sometimes reminded me of a distant woodman stripping bark. Then the insects run from crack and crevice, and the woodpecker secures them by darting out his long tongue furnished with barbed filaments and covered with glutinous saliva.

The marauding cat incurs less danger for a while since the young keepers have gone to the war. Yet only a week or two ago I saw a fine yellow sportsman tethered with tape to a barberry bush in the front garden of a neat cottage by a lane. A middle-aged woman was hanging clothes on a line stretching between two leaning apple trees. We passed the time o' day.

"You tie your cat to your apron string," said I.

She divided her explanations between me and the cat. "He is a most terr'ble poacher rascal. He is zo. You be-beant ee? He wun't never bide a minute if he's a-let loose. You never wun't, ool ee? My husban' he do dreamen he'll kill un there-right to once if there's any trouble be un. An' he'll do it too. An' zo you mind that. Can't ee? My husban' do dreamen, if he do only hear he's loose he wun't wait to



DARE I TAKE A CHICKEN?



Smith Whiting.

UNFULFILLED DESIRE.

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irregular with excavations of sand. There she finds young rabbits. Old ones provide a supply, more or less, during the greater part of the year, and a young rabbit is always something of a young fool. As soon as it is quiet he loves to come out to play on the embankment, or even to sit like a sphinx on the sand. It is not thus with rats, even the young. They sit indoors and suspect. They have a sense of danger without learning, but a young rabbit is slow to learn. I think in early days he associates danger only with noise. And the cat is amazingly quiet. So she waits above the hole, and enjoys an easy and not infrequent sport. Henceforth she never desists. She creeps beside the rick and stalks her prey among the rough grass and the docks. She crouches on the rough hillside below the dark pine spinney, or creeps away out of sight among the clumps of ragged gorse. No

zee un. *An' you did break away t'other day—didn' ee?* My husban' do dreaten he'll take an' kill un nex' time he do come home to house ader he do know it. *Zo you'd better to look out. Hadn' ee?* My husban' do dreaten—"

"But your husband seems more severe than any head-keeper," said I.

"My husban' is head kipper," said she. "Theas twenty year."

THE REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

BY ROBERT C. WITT, F.S.A.

THE appearance of the report of a Committee of Trustees of the National Gallery would be an event in any other time but the present, especially when it deals with a question so vital to the art of the country as the retention of important pictures. Now, while the nation is engaged in a struggle for life, all other considerations must give way, and even art is subsidiary to national life. Yet there are many who, for bitter but cogent reasons, are unable to take an active part in the great doings both at home and abroad. To them the country will look to keep alive such other interests, until in happier times the needs of the mind and the spirit can again claim as of right their old pride of place. On these terms no apology is needed for drawing attention to the recommendations of the Trustees. They deal not only

with the great exodus of works of art to America and Germany, but with the whole administration and organisation of the great national picture collections, questions which touch the life of every art lover in the kingdom. From having been the home of the collector, as in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, England has come to be the happy hunting ground for the Transatlantic and foreign buyer. Some slight idea of what we have lost in the past thirty years or so may be gathered from a list annexed to the report, setting out some five hundred out of the pictures that have passed, in most cases for ever, from these shores. But it is the quality rather than the quantity that appals. The name of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum appears again and again, and it has taken heavy toll of our best. The John seated in a radiant park-like landscape, by Geertgen Tot Sint Jans (here illustrated), is among them, as well as the charming profile portrait of a Florentine lady in her gorgeous brocade, usually ascribed to Domenico Veneziano. Both have gone to Berlin instead of to our National Gallery.

But to deplore them is useless; the urgent question is rather how to save what is left. The report makes valuable suggestions on this head, all, it may be noted, adverse to State registers and prohibitions and the Italian system of excessive interference in the rights of the individual; but based rather on holding out material and other inducements to the owner to give the nation the first refusal and on appeals to his patriotism and public spirit, which in this country have never been made in vain.

The figures given in support of increasing the public grant for the National Gallery will come as a surprise to many. Who would have believed that twenty-five years ago, when prices were not a tenth of what they now are, the annual grant to the Gallery was double what it now is? Yet such is the fact. Nor is it realised to how small an extent public money has been devoted to the purchase of the pictures. Since the foundation of the National Gallery in 1824 the Government has expended less than £720,000 on pictures, though the value of the collection runs into many millions. Again, out of the total number of pictures, which may be put at about 2,800, only about 600 have been purchased by the State. These figures will give some idea of how much private munificence, both in money and in kind, has done, and is doing, for the national collections, and how exiguous is the contribution of the State with its ordinary annual purchase grant of only £5,000 per annum. Nor is it only that this grant is inadequate in itself. It is still more inadequate relatively to others. The Metropolitan Museum of New York alone has nearly £2,000,000 in invested funds and a resultant annual income of some £80,000. In these circumstances the recommendation of the Committee that the annual grant of £5,000 be increased to £25,000 is modest



A FLORENTINE LADY.

Ascribed to Domenico Veneziano and now in Berlin.

indeed. Yet there can be no question of giving effect to it at the present time, nor, indeed, in the near future. On the contrary, since the outbreak of the war even the £5,000 per annum has been cut off, and if other economies are also to be practised in our domestic affairs the decision of the Treasury cannot be questioned.

The relations of the National Gallery of British Art, better known as the Tate Gallery, to the National Gallery form one of the most interesting portions of the report. While it is not generally known both galleries are administered by one Board of Trustees, and though Sir Henry Tate did not specify that his gallery should be devoted to modern British art, it has been so treated, except in the case of such of the Turners as hang there. The Trustees now recommend that it shall become in fact, as well as in name, a National Gallery of British Art of all periods, subject always to the proviso that the finest examples of British painting should continue, as now, to be hung in the National Gallery.

The relations of the two galleries to each other would thus become very much like those of the Luxembourg and the Louvre, the younger gallery sending up to the older such pictures as attained to the higher standard, while at the same time the National Gallery would be relieved of a number of works of secondary importance, which would pass to the Tate Gallery. This in turn would gain in interest and importance by representing the whole British school from the earliest date down to the art of to-day.

The question of the Chantrey Bequest is dealt with in a separate section of the report. The evidence called before the committee is thus summed up :

(a) Many of the Chantrey pictures are of inferior merit, and are a discredit to the walls of the gallery.

(b) The low standard set by these paintings renders it impossible for the Trustees of the National Gallery successfully to invite distinguished British artists to sell their pictures at modest prices for the honour of being represented in the National Collection, as is frequently done in France.

(c) A double standard of admission is set up, the Trustees sometimes refusing pictures superior in artistic merit to those which are simultaneously purchased under the Chantrey Bequest.

(d) While the older British masters with difficulty obtain admission to the National Collection, the younger generation enters with a rush by the Chantrey door.

(e) Really valuable offers of pictures to the nation are withheld because of the distrust and hostility thereby aroused.

(f) A number of the foremost modern British painters, whose works are eagerly bought for Continental galleries, remain entirely unrepresented in the gallery which affects to represent the contemporary art of this country.

The Trustees have for years protested against the anomaly under which they have a discretion as to accepting or refusing all pictures offered to them save only those purchased under the Chantrey Bequest, for which they are obliged to provide



ST. JOHN.

From a Painting by Geertgen Tot Sint Jans, now in Berlin.

accommodation, whether they think them worthy of the National Collection or no. The Trustees are of opinion that this anomaly should now be ended, if necessary by legislation.

The good work done by the National Art-Collections Fund is repeatedly referred to. For a society numbering only some fifteen hundred members in the first ten years of its existence to have collected and expended in enriching the national art collections about £130,000 is a striking testimony to the love of art inherent in the British people, in spite of all suggestions to the contrary. The part played by this society in securing the Rokeby "Venus," the Holbein "Duchess of Milan," and in assisting to add the great Carlisle Mabuse to the National Gallery will be fresh in the minds of the public. At the same time, efforts so tremendous as have been necessary to save these masterpieces for the nation cannot be repeated indefinitely, and, as the report points out, the society's work can be more efficiently performed by securing privately and unostentatiously desirable objects at reasonable prices.

FEEDING THE CHILDREN.

WE are apt to look upon village institutes and clubs merely as places where men and lads spend some evening hours after the day's work is done. No doubt this is their principal function; but there are other uses subsidiary, perhaps, but by no means unimportant, to which they may well be put. Such a one I came across the other day. Eglwys Fach—or Littlechurch, as we should call it in English—is a North Wales agricultural parish where many of the small holdings are situate two or three miles from the nucleus where church, chapels, school and a few houses cluster together to form the short village street. Here Lady Aberconway as principal landowner has turned a little disused inn into an institute. A large room is being built, but, meanwhile, the inn house-place with its wide fire arch and curved settle is the scene of evening talk and games, and the parlour within is reserved for quiet reading. Where farm "hands" live under the same roof as their employer, but have no warm place in which to sit of an evening, such accommodation as the institute offers is exceptionally welcome. But it was not in the evening that I looked in. Noon had just struck and yet the institute was not standing empty and silent, awaiting its after-dark habitués. No, indeed! it was teeming with life and action. The house-place, which is but some sixteen feet square, was set with as many tables and benches as it would hold, and there were more in a little room at the side. On the tables were basins and spoons and, in the kitchen behind, a busy matron was superintending two great iron pots that bubbled on the stove. A line of children dotted the street between the school and the institute and were already grouping at the latter's entrance. It was their dinner hour, and the institute was their restaurant. Of course, the majority of children of school age cannot possibly go back for dinner to their distant homes, and probably few mothers can start them off in the morning with other fare than a piece of bread and cheese to be eaten in the school yard, amid the winds and rains that prevail for many months of the year in this boisterous hill region.

It occurred to those who had created the institute that, without much expense or an undermining of the spirit of parochial independence, something far more wholesome, far better for the healthy growth of the children, could be done. They have therefore established penny dinners for all or any who attend school, and it was a penny dinner that I found about to be served. One of the bubbling pots was removed from the fire, and the lid being raised, the savour of a delicious soup arose. Sheep's head and any available vegetables were the bases of its nutriment. The mystery of its appetising flavour is known to the capable and kindly dame who devotes such whole-hearted attention to the contriving and cooking of these dinners, and to the cleanliness, neatness and right order of the whole of the premises where they are prepared and served. In a moment the bowls are filled and the children, all as neat as their environment, are relishing the soup and the home made bread that is served with it. This is of the right sort, with all the bone-forming ingredients retained. The wheat is ground whole by the miller close by, and whole it is used for the sustaining and toothsome loaves that are enjoyed by the Eglwys Fach children. I will confess myself guilty of larceny. I removed a goodly slice into my own pocket and, at lunch, ate it with pleasure in place of the exceedingly white and refined preparation to which we have habitually come down.

Meanwhile the basins of soup were emptying fast and the second course was in readiness. The other pot was off the fire and from it half a dozen truncheon-shaped objects were removed and, when stripped of their shrouds, proved to be jam rolls of the lightest and best. I wish that on my travels about Britain I was certain of as good entertainment at the proud places that call themselves hotels as falls to the lot of the fortunate children who pay a penny at Eglwys Fach! And note that the penny, even in these days of high prices, does cover the cost of food in its uncooked state. Of course, it could not be done if the institute, its gear and its caretaker were not there. But many rural parishes, through a single benefactor or a body of subscribers, can and do maintain such, and therefore with little further expense and trouble can largely add to the present welfare and future health of the children by similar attention to their middle day and principal meal. The average number served at Eglwys Fach just now is forty-five, but as many as sixty-one children have attended on one day. The present exiguous accommodation is a restraining influence, but when the new large room is complete there will be nothing in the way of increased numbers, and so popular have these dinners become that even residents in the village street incline towards taking advantage of this boon for their children. As a matter of fact, the regular attendants pay less than a penny a meal, for those who are there and pay on the first four days are charged nothing on the fifth or last day of the school week. Thus no child pays more than 4d. a week, though many have five dinners. This liberality has occasionally produced a slight deficit, but never more than a couple of shillings a week, and taking a considerable period, a slight profit appears. Yet the dinners are not only ample and good, but varied. It is not a case of *toujours perdrix*, of

invariable sheep's head soup and jam roll. Here are the menus for the first half of May:

- May 3. Oxhead soup : Baked currant and raisin pudding
- " 4. Irish stew : Rice, currants and raisins
- " 5. Marrow-bone soup : Baked butter-milk and raisin pudding
- " 6. Sheep's head broth : Boiled jam roley
- " 7. Sheep's head pie : Rice, rhubarb and currant pudding
- " 10. Oxhead soup : Baked suet pudding and mixed fruit
- " 11. Hashed oxhead : Baked sweet dripping and currant pudding
- " 12. Meat and shin bone : Butter milk currant cake
- " 13. Sheep's head broth : Baked raisin pudding
- " 14. Sheep's head stew : Jam roley

This is a sample only; as season and opportunity offer further variety of foodstuffs—wholesome yet economical—full advantage is taken; for, be it noted, we have here not only a good general idea, but an intelligent working of the details.

The sweet cleanliness of the premises and of the children, the matron's cheerful assiduity to do her best for her little clients and their consequent happy gaiety of demeanour, at once strike the visitor as combining to form the essential spirit of the place. Such combination is, of course, necessary for success, yet it is not difficult of attainment in, anyhow, the majority of our rural parishes. And the importance of attaining it needs no arguing; it speaks for itself. On the efficiency of the rising generation depends the future of the race, and fit and timely feeding is more than a detail towards its attainment. How many of us have heard of remote little Eglwys Fach? Yet here, without appeal to public authority, without the too frequent and always dangerous resort to rates and taxes, without even an ostentation of private liberality, excellent work towards a great end is being quietly yet efficiently done. It is a seed that should develop into a fruit-laden tree; an example that should be freely and widely copied.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

THE THRUSH AS MIMIC.

By W. H. HUDSON.

ONE day, when watching and listening to a grasshopper warbler among the furze bushes on a common, I met with an experience of that rare kind which invariably strikes the field naturalist as strange and almost incredible—an example of the most perfect mimicry in a species which has its own distinctive song and is not a mimic except once in a while and, as it were, by chance. The marsh warbler is our perfect mocking bird, our one professional mimic, while the starling in comparison is but an amateur. We all know the starling's ever varying performance in which he attempts a hundred things and occasionally succeeds; but even the starling sometimes affects us with a mild astonishment, and I will here give one instance.

I was staying at a village in the Wiltshire downs, and at intervals, while sitting at work in my room on the ground floor, I heard the cackling of a fowl at the cottage opposite. I heard, but paid no attention to that familiar sound; but after three days it all at once struck me that no fowl could lay an egg about every ten or twelve minutes and go on at this rate day after day, and, getting up, I went out to look for the cackler. A few hens were moving quietly about the open ground surrounding the cottage where the sound came from, but I heard nothing. By and by, when I was back in my room, the cackling sounded again, but when I got out, the sound had ceased and the fowls, as before, appeared quite unexcited. The only way to solve the mystery was to stand there out of doors for ten minutes, and before that time was over, a starling with a white grub in his beak flew down and perched on the low garden wall of the cottage, then, with some difficulty, squeezed himself into a small opening into a cavity under a strip of zinc which covered the bricks of the wall. It was a queer place for a starling's nest, on a wall 3ft. high and within 2yds. of the cottage door which stood open all day. Having delivered the grub, the starling came out again and, hopping on to the zinc, opened his beak and cackled like a hen, then flew away for more grubs.

I observed the starling a good deal after this, and found that invariably on leaving the nest he uttered his imitation of a fowl cackling, and no other note or sound of any kind. It was as if he was not merely imitating a sound, but had seen a fowl leaving the nest and then cackling, and mimicked the whole proceeding, and had kept up the habit after the young were hatched. To return to my experience on the common. About 50yds. from the spot where I sat there was a dense thicket of furze and thorn, with a huge mound in the middle composed of a tangle of white-thorn and bramble bushes mixed with ivy and wild clematis. From this spot, at intervals of half a minute or so, there issued the call of a duck—the prolonged, hoarse call note of a drake, two or three times repeated, evidently emitted in distress. I conjectured that it came from one of a small flock of ducks belonging to a cottage near the edge of the common on that side. The flock, as I had seen, was accustomed to go some distance from home, and I supposed that one of them, a drake, had got into that brambly thicket and could not make his way out. For half an hour I heard the calls without paying much attention, absorbed in watching the quaint little songster close to me and his curious

gestures when emitting his sustained reeling sounds. In the end the persistent distressed calling of the drake lost in a brambly labyrinth got a little on my nerves, and I felt it as a relief when it finally ceased. Then, after a short silence, another sound came from the same spot—a blackbird sound, known to everyone, but curiously interesting when uttered in the way I now heard it. It was the familiar loud chuckle, not emitted in alarm and soon ended, but the chuckle uttered occasionally by the bird when he is not disturbed, or when, after uttering it once for some real cause, he continues repeating it for no reason at all, producing the idea that he has just made the discovery that it is quite a musical sound and that he is repeating it, as if singing, just for pleasure. At such times the long series of notes do not come forth with a rush; he begins deliberately with a series of musical chirps uttered in a measured manner, like those of a wood wren, the prelude to its song, the notes coming faster and faster and swelling and running into the loud chuckling performance. This performance, like the lost drake's call, was repeated in the same deliberate or leisurely manner at intervals again and again until my curiosity was aroused and I went to the spot to get a look at the bird who had turned his alarm sound into a song and appeared to be very much taken with it. But there was no blackbird at the spot, and no lost drake, and no bird except a thrush sitting motionless on the bush mound. This was the bird I had been listening to uttering not his own thrush melody, which he perhaps did not know at all, but the sounds he had borrowed, so wide apart in their character and language.

The astonishing thing in this case was that the bird never uttered a note of his own original and exceedingly copious song; and I could only suppose that he had never learned the thrush melody, that he had perhaps been picked up as a fledgeling and put in a cage, where he had imitated the sounds he heard and liked best and made them his song, and that he had finally escaped or had been liberated.

The wild thrush, we know, does introduce certain imitations into his own song, but the borrowed notes, or even phrases, are, as a rule, few and not always to be distinguished from his own. Sometimes one can pick them out; thus, on the borders of a marsh where redshanks breed, I have heard the call of that bird distinctly given by the thrush. And again, where the ring-ouzel is common, the thrush will get its brief song exactly.

When thrushes taken from the nest are reared in towns where they never hear the thrush or any other bird sing, they are often exceedingly vocal and utter a medley of sounds sometimes very distressing to the ear. I have heard many caged thrushes of this kind in London, but the most remarkable instance I have met with was at the little seaside town of Seaford. Here in the main shopping street a caged thrush lived for years in a butcher's shop, and poured out its song continuously, the most distressing thrush performance I ever heard, composed of loud, shrill and harsh sounds—imitations of screams and shouts, boy whistlers, saw filing, knives sharpened on steels, and numerous other unclassifiable noises, but all more or less painful. The whole street was filled with the noise, and the owner used to boast that his caged thrush was the most persistent as well as the loudest singer that had ever been heard. He had no nerves, and was proud of it! On a recent visit to Seaford I failed to hear the bird when walking about the town, and after two or three days went into the shop to enquire about it. They told me it was dead—that it had been dead over a year; also that many visitors to Seaford had missed its song and had called at the shop to ask about the bird. The strangest thing about its end, they said, was its suddenness. The bird was singing its loudest one morning and had been at it for some time, filling the whole place with its noise, when suddenly in the middle of its song it dropped down dead from its perch.

To drop dead while singing is not an unheard of nor a very rare occurrence in caged birds, and it probably happens, too, in birds living their natural life. Listening to a nightingale in full song, pouring out its powerful music continuously, as the lark sings, one sometimes wonders that something does not give way to end the vocalist's performance and life at the same instant. Some such incident probably suggested the old legend of the minstrel and the nightingale which Crawshaw told so wonderfully in perhaps the finest bird poem in the language.

The blackbird, like the thrush, sometimes borrows a note or a phrase, and, like the thrush again, if reared by hand he may become a nuisance by mimicking some disagreeable sound and using it by way of song. I heard of such a case a short time ago at Sidmouth. The ground floor of the house where I lodged was occupied by a gentleman who had a fondness for bird music, and, being an invalid confined to his rooms, he kept a number of birds in cages. He had, besides canaries, the thrush, chaffinch, linnet, goldfinch and cirl bunting. I remarked that he did not have the best singer of all—the blackbird. He said that he had procured one, or that some friend had sent him one, a very beautiful ouzel cock in the blackest plumage and with the orange-tawniest bill, and he had anticipated great pleasure from hearing its fluting melody. But alas! no blackbird song did this unnatural blackbird sing. He had learnt to bark like a dog, and whenever the singing spirit took him he would bark once or twice or three times, and then, after an interval of silence

of the proper length, about fifteen seconds, he would bark again, and so on until he had had his fill of music for the time. The barking got on the invalid's nerves, and he sent the bird away. "It was either that," he said, "or losing my senses altogether."

SHIRE BONE AND THOROUGHBRED BONE.

FROM MR. A. MULES.

SIR,—I read with great interest your paper on the cannon bone of the horse. What you did not make plain was whether the bias of growth was on the outer or the inner aspect of the bone. The subject is a most interesting one, illustrating the modifications due to manner of life rather than inheritance. I hope if you continue your researches you will be good enough to send me an account of them.—A. MULES, Armstrong College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

FROM MR. A. G. BURCHARDT ASHTON.

SIR,—The letters and illustrations of the bones of horses open up a field of natural history that has been very much neglected. May I suggest that you should try to secure the co-operation of the Natural History Museum and Zoological Society? If the owners of thoroughbreds would send their old horses to Regent's Park they would be conferring a double benefit on science. Any peculiarity could be noted, and the pedigrees of the horses being known, we should find out how far these peculiarities are hereditary. As Mr. Pilliner has mentioned my little experiment, perhaps a few words may be of interest to horse breeders. As he says, I have been trying to breed the thoroughbred up to 14st., and have come to the conclusion that it is easier to breed the thoroughbred than the half bred, because the pedigree is on record.

There are several reasons, besides the quality of bone, why the thoroughbred carries weight. First, he has so much less lumber to carry in his own body; second, the thickness of the hide makes the half-bred horse's leg look much bigger than it really is, as anyone who has seen both sorts fired can tell. I began with a mare by Isobar, and was advised by Mr. W. H. P. Jenkins to breed back to Stockwell and Rataplan. Her grand daughter has just been put to Skiograph. Her foal, if she has one, will have thirteen crosses of Pocahontas (Stockwell's dam) in its pedigree. Any man who can ride under 14st. cannot do better than buy a three year old filly with bone and power that is too slow for racing, put her to a powerful short-legged horse and feed the foal well. He is sure to breed good hunters, and may breed something to win steeplechases. They are temperate when not raced and very clever. The stallions bred from have been Ferdinand, Loch Rosque, Old Sam, Primero, Rockaway and Gold Medallist.

Horse breeding is in a state of transition, and we may have to change our methods. The half-bred utility horse has gone out of use owing to motors, and people are generally riding better bred animals than twenty years ago. Now that racing has been stopped, thoroughbred mares ought to be picked up cheap, so strike while the iron is hot. Another point is the difference between the flat racer and the steeplechaser. The first is generally higher behind, the latter higher at the withers.—A. G. BURCHARDT ASHTON.

FROM THE VETERINARY SUPERINTENDENT,
LIVERPOOL CORPORATION.

SIR,—I have read the article on "Shire Bone and Thoroughbred Bone," and in my opinion the bone of the Shire horse has not had fair treatment. I notice that the Shire bone in the diagram is of the round variety, such as is associated with the commoner breeds of the class. The well bred Shire horse as a rule possesses bone that is flatter from before, backwards, than on its front aspect. On the other hand, the commoner breeds are fairly round in shape, and their greatest width would be in front. Therefore, I consider that if you took the bone of a well bred, heavy boned horse, you would find the marrow cavity much less than that of a round boned, common bred horse. The bone itself would also be much thicker and denser. In due course I will have a bone such as is described, from a well bred animal, prepared and forwarded on to you, and you will then be able to form an opinion as to the relative difference between well bred and coarsely bred Shires. If possible, I will also obtain one of a thoroughbred animal. In conclusion, I am of opinion that little difference would exist in the density of the bone between well bred Shires and thoroughbreds, but that the Shires would be comparatively much thicker in bone than that of the thoroughbred.—T. EATON JONES.

FROM MR. THOS. WM. CAVE, F.R.C.V.S.

SIR,—I may say that nearly forty years ago I was taught as a student by the late Professor Pritchard that thoroughbred bone was more compact and harder than that of the Shire, and that it was the quality of the bone which mattered. I was also taught that there was a greater thickness of bone on the inner aspect towards the central line of the body, as it was this part of the bone which had the greater weight and strain to bear. I think this latter theory is supported by an examination of the position of the many exostoses to which the extremities of horses are liable. Exostoses usually occur on the inner aspect of the bone or joint, although they may sometimes be found on the outer surface, yet the former will be the more serious and will cause greater lameness. To take a simple every day example:—Splints are seen on the inner small metacarpal bones and will cause lameness. Splints on the outer small metacarpal bone are much rarer and do not often cause lameness. There will, of course, be exceptions to this very general rule.—THOS. WM. CAVE, F.R.C.V.S.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MILK VERSUS EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—My attention was drawn to the question of the relative feeding value of milk and eggs by what I may call the dietetic peculiarities of a friend with whom I stayed during part of the Easter vacation. My friend maintained that a healthy man ought to take only one square meal in the day, namely, dinner. He contended that he put this doctrine into practice himself by taking for breakfast only a piece of toast and a little marmalade, and for luncheon only a sandwich. He admitted, however, that his breakfast included three large cups of coffee which contained at least a pint of milk, and that he also drank at least half a pint of milk with his luncheon sandwich. I suggested that a pint of milk was equivalent to at least two eggs, and that the two meals which he did not call square consequently included the equivalent of at least two eggs for breakfast and one for lunch. This at once started an argument about the relative feeding value of milk and eggs, which, like all such arguments, resulted in no definite conclusion.

On returning to Cambridge I looked up the necessary references, and for my own satisfaction worked out the figures, which show clearly that I had much under-estimated the feeding value of milk as compared with eggs. It has since occurred to me that readers of COUNTRY LIFE may be interested to see the figures, which seem to me to settle a point on which some correspondence recently appeared.

The average composition of milk is known with considerable certainty, since it is analysed more frequently than almost any other substance. Dr. Richmond, who has analysed several hundred thousand samples of milk, gives the following average composition :

	Per cent.
Water	87·35
Fat	3·74
Sugar	4·70
Casein	3·00
Albumen	0·40
Ash	0·75
Other constituents	0·06
	<hr/> 100·00

Assuming that casein and albumen, being both of them proteins, have the same feeding value, the composition of a pint of milk works out as follows :

	Grams.
Water	51·2
Fat	2·2
Sugar	27·1
Protein	20
Ash	4·1
	<hr/> 100·00

The composition of eggs is known with somewhat less certainty. König, however, gives what is probably a reliable statement of the average composition. At any rate, it agrees closely with several analyses made a few years ago by Hendrick. König's figures are as follows :

	Per cent.
Water	73·67
Protein	12·56
Fat	12·11
Other constituents	1·66
	<hr/> 100·00

The commonly accepted figure for the weight of an egg is 20z., and this appears to be substantially a correct average, for Pearl and Surface, who have weighed many thousand eggs in the course of their work on poultry breeding, find the average weight of an egg to be 56 grams. Subtracting 2 grams for the weight of the shell, we may take it that the average weight of the contents of an egg is 54 grams. From this figure, and the average composition already quoted, the average composition of the contents of an egg works out as follows :

	Grams.
Water	40
Protein	6·1
Fat	6·1
Ash	0·1
	<hr/> 56·00

To arrive at the relative feeding value of a pint of milk and an egg, it appears to be necessary only to compare the two sets of figures given above. But on reflection it is found that comparison is not altogether simple, for while eggs contain only two foodstuffs, protein and fat, milk contains both these and sugar in addition. No doubt the simplest method of comparison is to assume that both milk and eggs are used chiefly as sources of protein, in which case the relative value is proportional to the protein content only. On this supposition, a pint of milk, containing 20 grams of protein, is almost exactly equivalent to three eggs, each containing 6·1 grams of protein.

But this kind of comparison, though possessing the merit of simplicity, is obviously not satisfactory, for it ignores both the fat and the sugar. It ignores also the fact that most people who are in the habit of including milk and eggs in their dietary take abundance of protein in other forms. Now it is true in the case of protein that enough is as good as a feast, and quite probably much better. It is advisable, therefore, to seek some other basis of comparison, which, although it may not be so simple, is more accurate.

It is generally accepted that, provided the supply of protein is adequate, the function of the food is to provide heat to keep the body warm, and energy to enable it to perform the functions of life, and it is possible to measure the heat and energy producing power of a food in terms of heat units. It is known, for instance, that 1 gram of fat can produce in the body heat or energy equal to 9·3 heat units. The corresponding figures for protein and sugar are in each case 4·1 heat units. Assuming, as is no doubt the case, that the foodstuffs of both milk and eggs are completely digested by the

normal human being, the heat and energy values of a pint of milk and an egg work out as follows :

A Pint of Milk.		An Egg.		
Grams.	Heat Units.	Grams.	Heat Units.	
Protein ..	20 ..	82	6·1 ..	27·1
Fat ..	22 ..	204	6·1 ..	62·1
Sugar ..	27·1 ..	112	— ..	—
			<hr/> 399	90·1

On this basis a pint of milk of average quality is capable of producing in the body heat and energy equal to about 400 heat units, while an egg can produce only the equivalent of about 90 heat units. In other words, a pint of milk is equivalent to about four and a half eggs. It appears, therefore, that my argumentative friend was consuming in the form of milk at the meals he did not count the equivalent of about seven eggs, or rather more than twice as much as my defective memory or mental arithmetic led me to suggest.

The value of milk as a feeding stuff is very commonly under-estimated, no doubt because of what I may call its deceptive fluidity. Those who make a habit of drinking milk as a beverage should remember that many articles of food containing no more dry matter than milk are solids. Many people drink a pint of milk, which weighs rather more than 1lb., and imagine that they have taken nothing of any account in the way of nourishment. No one would eat 1lb. of turnip and ignore the fact that he had eaten something. And yet the amount of solid matter in the two cases is about equal.—T. B. WOOD, School of Agriculture, Cambridge.

DOTTEREL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—Riding on the South Downs at the end of April, I came very close to and presently flushed three dotterel, all of them in their smartest spring plumage. This is the third time in a dozen years that I have met with these now rare birds in the South of England. Once during the first week in May; once in October, during the autumn or return migration; and this year on the last day but one of April. Dotterel, which were once fairly familiar birds in certain parts of England, are now distinctly rare. Yet they do still come to us in spring, passing on quickly to their nesting places in the Scottish mountains and the North of Europe. That some numbers of them alight on our South Downs each year I am pretty certain.

It may be readily understood that I was delighted to set eyes again on these beautiful members of the plover family, whose ruddy chestnut breasts and flanks, white gorgets, broad white eye stripes, dark crowns and ashy brown upper colouring at once told me what they were. I watched them for several minutes, and riding up closer, flushed them within less than thirty yards. They flew no great distance, and again I approached them. This time they were shyer, and at forty yards' distance rose and went away.

The dotterel is quite one of the most interesting of our British birds. It has always been regarded as a peculiarly foolish and unsuspecting creature, and our ancestors seem to have bestowed its name, which is in reality the diminutive of dotard, for this reason. Before the age of shooting flying, English sportsmen captured many species of birds by netting, and the dotterel seems to have fallen a ready victim to this method. Bacon says of them : "In catching of dotterels we see how the foolish bird playeth the ape in gesture." Drayton, I think, in his "Polyolbion" has also some verses setting forth the doting foolishness of this fowl. Modern observers have noted the extremely absurd and transparent devices of the hen dotterel when surprised on her nest. I once put off a hen bird from her eggs on the high fjeld of Norway. She shammed wounded, spread herself out, screamed vociferously and kicked her legs violently. I drove her forward, but she showed little fear, running slowly in front with wings and tail outspread, and occasionally entangling her wings in her tail and stumbling about in most ludicrous fashion. She presently stopped and let us approach again, after which we suffered her to go back to her nest.

Dotterel reach our shores towards the end of April or beginning of May. Nowadays they pass from the downs of Sussex and other landing places pretty rapidly for the north. A hundred years ago, according to Bewick and other writers, they were common in Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire, "appearing in small flocks on the heaths and moors of those counties during the months of May and June, and are then very fat and much esteemed for the table." They were at that period very well known also on the Wiltshire downs.—H. A. BRYDEN.

WARBLING AT THE FRONT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—I was very interested to read the letters from the front. Personally I have not yet heard the nightingale out here; but what does strike one and charm one in the trenches is the song of the larks, numbers of whom can be heard all day as they soar above the lines. I think probably in many cases they are nesting between the hostile trenches. Not that they are the only signs of natural life, by any means. At this moment there are numbers of sparrows twittering about their nests in what remains of a ruined building zoolyds, behind the firing line, where this letter is written. Swifts and swallows, too, are above the trenches all day, the former often fluttering down into them after the flies that swarm in them this hot weather. I have also seen owls, wagtails and other birds about, and to-day a weasel showed its head on the parapet of a front line trench just where I was sitting. In fact, Nature seems to be carrying on just as if no such things as shot and shell existed. I can give a possibly more curious instance of this disregard for firing. This year a thrush nested in the butts of Erddig Rifle Range at Wrexham. The nest was just above the direct line of fire, but the ground and trees all round are scarred with shots that had gone high, and every day several bullets must have come dangerously near finding a billet in the nest.

Machine-gun and rifle fire went on daily, often continuously from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. In spite of this, the bird hatched and reared its brood till one of the men in the butts handled the old bird, having caught it on the nest, which proved too much for her. She deserted, leaving the young ones to die.—F. JONES-BATEMAN, 2nd Welsh Regiment, 3rd Brigade.

THE CUCKOO.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—You write, in answer to "A. K.'s" question as to the cuckoo being polygamous, in the affirmative. Is not this bird, on the contrary, polyandrous? Perhaps it is both one and the other, but certainly the female "keeps company" with more than one male. And then, too, may I say that cuckoos are not *frequently* exhibited at bird shows, but only rarely.

have not been good, but those described in the article fire one's ambition, and if this letter may be inserted in your valuable columns I feel that it will, perhaps, bring the answers to the questions small poultry rearers will be asking themselves. I notice the incubating temperature mentioned in the article is only 103deg., as against the 104deg. or 105deg. generally advocated by English breeders, and in my own experience. The chicks under this temperature hatch out on the twentieth and twenty-first days. One would be glad to know whether the lower temperature and later hatching produce healthier and stronger chickens.—M. C. P., Lancashire.

[All enquiries will be carefully answered at the end of the series.—ED.]

THE SEA-BLUE BIRD OF MARCH.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Perhaps you may like to publish the enclosed photographs of the



A FLASH OF BLUE.



IN FLIGHT.

They are uninteresting birds in captivity, and, as you remark, quite unfitted for it, unless kept in a very large aviary.—HUBERT D. ASTLEY.

FLEMISH METHODS OF POULTRY REARING IN ENGLAND.
[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As a reader very interested in the article on Poultry Rearing in your issue of May 15th by "Belle Orpigne," may I venture to ask a few questions of interest to a poultry rearer on a comparatively minute scale? Are the Flemish methods applicable to our English climate, especially in this North Country? Is it possible to procure in this country the set of incubator "Belle Orpigne" finds so successful? Also, would her methods be successful on such a small scale as my rearing is done? I only hatch from 200 to 300 chicks each season, in a Hearson's incubator holding fifty eggs, and I incubate from the end of February till May or the first week in June. My results

CHECKING FLIGHT.

Kingfisher in flight, as supplementary to those published in your issue of April 17th.—J. H. SYMONDS.

[We have much pleasure in reproducing these very vivid and beautiful photographs.—ED.]

STOAT VERSUS RAT.

[To the EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Walking through a wood during last week I noticed a stoat carrying a full-grown rat which it had evidently vanquished in open combat. The weight of the rat must have been considerably greater than that of the stoat. Unfortunately, I was not close enough to see to what extent the rat had been mauled. Is it usual for the victor to carry away the vanquished in a battle of this sort? I should have thought it would have been easier for the stoat to make a meal on the spot.—T. S.

FROM THE CAUCASUS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—I send a picture of a Tartas woman and child, the wife of a friend's "dvornik," who was very reluctant to allow his wife to be photographed, but gave in at last. The photograph was taken in the yard, every male being carefully excluded before she was allowed to show her face. The photograph was taken in June, 1913, in Tiflis.—E. K. FULLER.



HER FIRST PHOTOGRAPH.

with regard to this in the actual firing line. My company holds the ruins of a now famous little village a mile or two south of Ypres and in spite of the devastation and continual noise of war, bird life continues its usual course, and the songster's note is no less sweet in the firing line at the present moment than it was in the days of peace. "Frightfulness" has no effect on the nightingale, for instance, which sings away merrily in a wood just behind us when shells are literally screaming over its head and bursting near at hand. The house-martins have returned as usual to the village and have built their nests wherever there is a wall standing that possesses an eave; they seem to see no difference in the pretty peaceful little village of last year and the heap of ruins of this, set in the British lines and only a matter of forty yards from the German. I naturally have not much scope for birds' nesting owing to the inadvisability of moving about by day, but I have found several nests just behind the line, including a wren's. Thus I am convinced by personal experience that war has no terror for birds.—B. E. D. W., British Expeditionary Force, Belgium.

A FORGOTTEN LANGUAGE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—Those of your readers who know the Hon. Daines Barrington as the friend and correspondent of White of Selborne may be interested to hear how he took a journey into Cornwall to find out if any traces of the Cornish language still existed. It was in 1769, the year previous to the date when the correspondence between Gilbert White and Daines Barrington commenced. To his circle of friends—White was not among them, for Barrington only made the natural-

BIRDS
NESTING
AT THE
FRONT.

THE EDITOR.
SIR.—I have read in various papers correspondence on the subject of the effects of war on bird life. It may interest your readers to know what I have noticed

Sennen, which even to-day is a remote and primitive village, he felt certain some traces of the language would still be found. But at Sennen, like all the other places, not any Cornish was spoken. Even his visits to lonely fishermen's cottages scattered about the wild coast proved fruitless. It really seemed as if his friends had been right. His host, however, told him to go to Mousehole, where there lived an old woman named Dolly Pentreath, who sold fish. If the price he offered her did not meet her wishes she would scold him in a language the meaning of which he could not understand. So Daines Barrington drove over to Mousehole. He found Dolly Pentreath living in a little hut in a narrow street, and when introduced to her as a gentleman who had almost believed Cornish to be extinct, she upbraided him "for three minutes" in a language that to him sounded like Welsh. "Dolly Pentreath is short of stature," writes Barrington, "and bends very much with age, being in her eighty-seventh year, so lusty, however, as to walk hither to Castle Horneck, about three miles in bad weather in the morning, and back again. She does indeed talk Cornish as readily as others do English, being bred up from a child to know no other language; nor could she (if we may believe her) talk a word of English before she was past twenty years of age, as, her father being a fisherman, she was sent with fish to Penzance at twelve years old, and sold them in the Cornish language, which the inhabitants in general, even the gentry, did well to understand. She is positive, however, that there is neither in Mousehole nor in any other part of the county, any other person who knows anything of it, or at least can converse in it." She lived for some years after Barrington discovered her, dying on December 26th, 1777. But it was not until 1860 that a tombstone was erected to her in Paul Churchyard by Louis Lucien



CORNISH FISH SELLERS.

Bonaparte—erected to Dolly Pentreath, the last person known to converse in Cornish.—THEODORA ROSCOE.

PIGEONS AS FOOD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—In your article on "Substitutes for Beef and Mutton" you mention pigeons as a substitute, by which it is to be supposed you include both loft and wild. To the latter, however, country folk have an objection, on the ground that unless very well cooked they are injurious and likely to bring on dangerous illness; while loft pigeons are considered to be rather tasteless. Pigeon pie suppers were at one time common, and the landladies of most village inns were willing to prepare pigeon pie suppers for their regular customers, for the sake of the ale which was certain to be called for in extra quantity, and the more strong ale used to wash the "john-pies" down, the more easily would the "john-pies" suit the stomach. The method of making the "john-pies" was first to cook the pigeons by stewing in water for a long time before putting them under the crust, this ensuring proper cooking by a double dose of fire and water. The pigeons were the better for being kept a few days after being shot. I remember a case in which at one pigeon pie supper one of the party challenged the rest to eat a roasted crow. It was accepted by one, and the company assembled the next night to see the crow eaten, which it was in due course. As the last morsel was washed down, the eater said: "Yis; Ah coo ett crow, but Aw'm danged if Ah hanker for it!" The crow had been dosed while cooking with a very liberal dose of red pepper and Top Mill snuff. It was a joke which amused three villages for months. Neither pigeons nor rooks in any way of cooking are greatly admired by country folk. The labourers' wives do not care to cook them for table, as long stewing is always necessary; but they make good gravy. There is an objection to rabbits, and nothing beats "pig" meat.—SENEX.



DOLLY HOLDING FORTH.

ist's acquaintance in the following spring—his journey into the far west seemed a wild-goose chase. He made Penzance his headquarters, and, together with the host of the hotel where he was putting up, visited, he writes, all the most likely places in the Land's End district. At